# AN EVENING WITH SHAKSPERE

SHERWIN CODY

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SHAKSPERE

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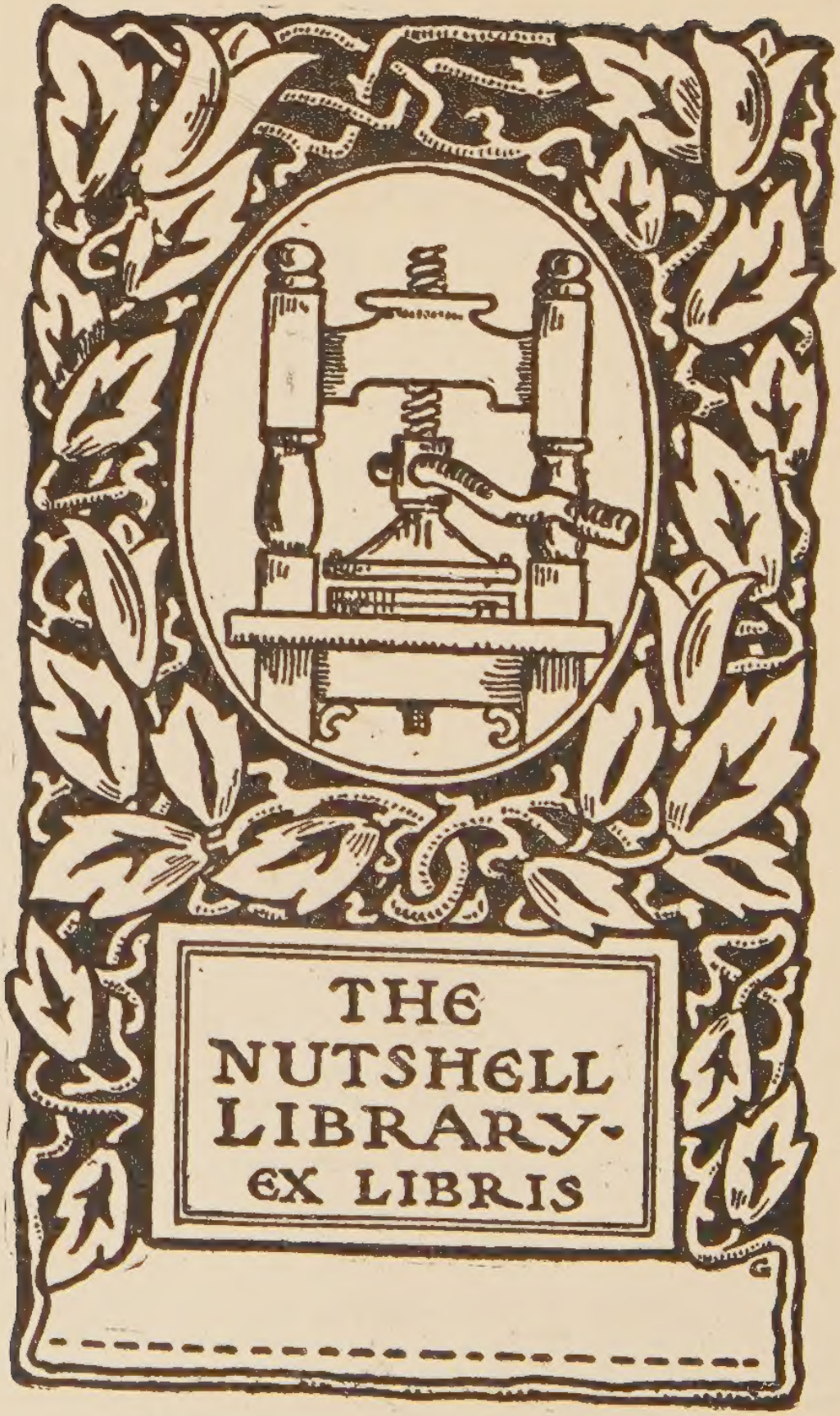
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# An Evening with

# SHAKSPERE

SHERWIN CODY COURSE IN ENGLISH
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# SHAKSPERE

## Shakspere the Beginning of Modern Literature

Modern literature begins with **Shakspere.** When Homer wrote he embodied in his work the best that had been thought and felt in the world until his time. So Virgil, Dante, and Chaucer were each the sum of the best that has preceded them. This is true of Shakspere in still greater degree. Shakspere gives us the best in thought and feeling to be found anywhere in the world before his time. We might almost say that when we have read him we do not need to read Homer or Virgil or Dante, for in our reading of Shakspere we have already become familiar with their best thoughts.

From another point of view Shakspere is the beginning of modern literature. He is the oldest writer whose work we can read in the language in which it was written. The English of four hundred years ago is antiquated; yet we can read the English of Shakspere and understand it without the help of a translator. The work of every writer before Shakspere is practically buried to us: we must read it through translations, or else by giving years to the study of the language in which it is written. Such language and such literature may appropriately enough be called dead. But Shakspere is fully alive to anyone who will read him with care. In this sense, therefore, he marks the beginning of modern literature.

But even if he were not first in point of time, he would be the starting point from which we would reckon in all our study of modern literature, or any literature, because he is the greatest. To the student of modern literature, therefore, Shakspere must always be, like Greenwich, the prime meridian, from which literary longitude is reckoned east and west, the world over.

## What We Know of the Man

We naturally wish to know something of the man who thus stands head and shoulders above all the other men of literature in the world's history. Who was he? What was he? What did he do?

All we know of the life of Shakspere is what has been gathered from church records, town records, account books, and very brief references to him in the works of his contemporaries. Tradition has preserved some few stories about him; but no one thought of writing his life till he had been dead many years.

## Birth of Shakspere

William Shakspere was born at Stratford, on the river Avon, in Warwickshire, England. At that time it was a town of 1,400 inhabitants—in short, a country village; but it was located in one of the most picturesque and beautiful regions imaginable, the very heart of England.

The date of his birth we do not know. The church record shows that he was christened or baptized April

26, 1564. There is a tradition that the date of his death was the date of his birth—April 23 old style, or May 3 new style.

## Shakspere's Parents

John, the father of William Shakspere, was a well-to-do burgess of Stratford. He was a farmer, and he made and sold gloves. In time he rose to fill the posts of chamberlain, alderman, and high bailiff.

William's mother, Mary Arden, belonged to a family of landed gentry dating back to a time before the Conquest. Her father had died, and she brought her husband considerable property.

William was the eldest of the family, though two baby girls had died before his birth. There were a sister and two brothers younger than himself. One brother was an actor and died in 1607. The older brother and sister oulived their famous relative.

## Schooling

Shakspere's father could not write his own name; but his son must have had some education. His fellow playwright, Ben Jonson, describes his learning as "small Latin and less Greek." There was a Free Grammar School at Stratford, in which presumably Latin, Greek, and mathematics were taught, as well as other studies usually required in preparation for the universities. To this school John Shakspere, now in the height of his prosperity, doubtless sent his eldest son until he was fifteen or sixteen.

## Players at Stratford

It appears in the town records that during the period of Shakspere's boyhood, say from the ages of ten to fifteen, the chamberlain of Stratford paid sums of money to "the Earl of Leicester's players" "my Lord of Warwick's players," and "the Earl of Worcester's players." During this period John Shakspere had become chief alderman, and no doubt he, like the town of Stratford which he represented, welcomed and patronized the dramatic fraternity. Moreover, in 1575 Queen Elizabeth visited Kenilworth, which was within walking distance of Stratford, and we may well believe that Shakspere, a boy of eleven, was taken to see the magnificent shows with which Leicester welcomed his royal mistress, whose husband he hoped to be. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream* Oberon describes some of these shows with such accuracy that we cannot help supposing that the author of the play had witnessed those wonderful exhibitions at Kenilworth, the talk of England for many a year afterward.

## The Family Fortunes Decline

Until 1578 John Shakspere seems to have been a prosperous and wealthy man, but now we find him mortgaging his wife's farm; then he is not required to pay the weekly levy for the relief of the poor; his borough taxes for 1579 are entered as "unpaid and unaccounted for." Finally he sells his wife's property; but his case grows only the worse. Six years later, on a writ to seize his goods for debt, return is made

that John Shakspere has nothing in which he is "able to be distrained." He is also deprived of his office as alderman because he "doth not come to the hall, nor hath not done of long time." He was even arrested and had to sue out a writ of *habeas corpus*. Even so late as 1592 the commission appointed to investigate the conformity of the people of Warwickshire to the established religion notes the failure of John Shakspere to appear monthly at church, and sets it down to the fear of "processe of debt." From this period his fortunes steadily improve until his death in 1601. This change in the tide of his financial affairs we may safely attribute to the success of his son as a dramatist. We may guess from this, also, that 1592 is the date which marks the beginning of Shakspere's popularity.

### Shakspere's Youth

What the future dramatist did between the time at which he left school, presumably on account of the decline of his father's fortunes, and the date of his marriage, we do not know. There is one tradition that he was apprenticed to a butcher, another that he was a country schoolmaster, and some suppose, from the accuracy of his legal allusions, that he spent some time in an attorney's office.

### Marriage

All we actually know of this period is that at the age of eighteen he married Anne Hathaway, the daughter of a yeoman, at Shottery, a hamlet near Stratford.

License was granted by the bishop of Worcester in November, 1582, for a marriage upon once asking of the bans; and their first child was baptized May 26, 1583. The wife was eight years older than her husband, and the irregularities revealed by the dates suggest something more than a little wildness in the young man's character. In 1585 William Shakspere became the father of twins, Hamnet and Judith. The son Hamnet died in 1596; the daughter is mentioned in his will.

We have no certain information concerning Shakspere from the year 1585, when his twin children were born, to 1592, when the dramatist Greene alludes in bitter terms to the rising playwright, who has become his rival. Tradition has it that he was obliged to leave Stratford because of a deer-stealing escapade. According to this story, the young poet made some verses on Sir Thomas Lucy, whose estate of Charlcote was near Stratford and who had been irritated by the robbing of his deer-close. One verse only of the poem has this tradition preserved, but its reference to "lowsie Lucy" is sufficiently insulting to account for Sir Thomas's ire. Sir Thomas Lucy was a member of Parliament, of the Puritan party, and about this time is known to have introduced into Parliament a bill for the preservation of game. In *The Merry Wives of Windsor* Shakspere makes Justice Shallow complain that Sir John Falstaff had broken open his lodge and killed his deer; moreover, there are "luces" in the Shallow coat-of-arms. The Welsh parson misunderstands this word and says, "the dozen white

louses do become an old coat well"—a bit of gentle revenge which we may imagine the successful dramatist taking in this play written especially at the request of the Queen.

## Goes Up to London

In 1587 the "Queen's Players" were at Stratford, and possibly Shakspere went back to London with the company. There is a tradition that he began life in the great city by holding horses outside the doors of the theaters. The fact is, however, that we have no knowledge at all as to how he got his start in the dramatic world. The first record we have is the allusion made by Robert Greene in his *Greenes Groatsworth of Wit bought with a Million of Repentance.* This was a pamphlet published immediately after Greene's death by his executor, Henry Chettle. The playwright on his deathbed warns certain of his author friends against putting their trust in players: "Yes, trust them not;" says he; "for there is an upstart Crow, beautified with our feathers, that with his *tygers heart wrapt in a players hide,* supposes he is as well able to bumbast out a blank verse as the best of you: and being an absolute Johannes factotum, is in his owne conceit the onely Shakescene in a country." The words "a tygers heart wrapt in a players hide" are a parody on a line from the Third Part of *Henry VI.*,

*Oh tygers heart wrapt in a woman's hide.*

Shakspere had recast this play from a preceding play

entitled *The True Tragedie of Richard, Duke of York*, of which Greene may himself have been the author, and from which, at any rate, Shakspere has borrowed the line referred to.

A few months later, in December, 1592, a pamphlet entitled *Kind-Harts Dream*, by Henry Chettle appeared. It seems that Shakspere and Marlowe had taken offense at the references in *Greenes Groatsworth*. Replying to these Chettle says that as for one of them (Marlowe), while he reverences his learning he has nothing to answer for, and cares not ever to make his acquaintance. Then he goes on: "The other [Shakspere] whome at that time I did not so much spare as since I wish I had. . . I am sory as if the originall fault had beene my fault, because my selfe have seene his demeanor no lesse civill, than he exelent in the qualitie he professes; besides, divers of worship have reported his uprightness of dealing, which argues his honesty, and his facetious grace in writing, that approoves his art." ("Qualitie" was used of the actor's profession, and this is a compliment to Shakspere as an actor. "Facetious" means felicitous, happy.)

## Shakspere at the Age of 28

A careful study of these references to Shakspere does not, I think, warrant us in saying more than that in perhaps five years' time Shakspere had won for himself a respectable standing as an actor, and that he had rewritten the plays of others. Greene's wrath is far more likely to have arisen from the fact that

Shakspere had remodelled one of his plays, to his loss and discredit, than that the young dramatist was proving a successful rival with original plays.

We also see that Shakspere is a "good fellow," a gentleman, and an actor and author of parts. He has just come on to the broad stage of public life; and he is bearing himself modestly and well.

## First Published Poems

Precisely what success, if any in particular, brought Shakspere into notice in 1592 we cannot say. But evidently fortune's tide had turned in his favor in this year, and not only is he able to help his father out of debt, but he begins to think seriously of winning literary reputation. In 1593 *Venus and Adonis*, "the first heire of my invention," as he calls it, was published with a dedication to the Earl of Southampton. This young lord was nine years his junior; but evidently the two were excellent friends, though in the appeal of his dedication Shakspere is very modest. In his *Lucrece*, published the following year, 1594, he speaks as if he were thoroughly confident of the Earl's friendship, which was no doubt balanced on his side by the rising reputation Shakspere was winning. These two poems made a distinct literary success. In London the successful author who is also a gentleman by nature has always been given a social position next to the aristocracy. We may conclude, therefore, that Shakspere had had that ample measure of literary popularity which should make his social position secure.

Southampton was a generous and highspirited young man, perhaps the model for Shakspere's chivalrous heroes in his earlier comedies. There is a tradition that the noble earl once gave or offered the dramatist £1,000 to carry out some purchase. This is doubtless an exaggeration; but we soon find our author and actor buying land and applying in the name of his father for a coat-of-arms.

## Prosperity

At Christmas time, 1593, the Lord Chamberlain's company of players performed before Queen Elizabeth, and Shakspere's name is in the list of actors. In 1596 John Shakspere applied for a grant of coat armor, and in the following year the grant was made by the Garter King-of-Arms. We presume from this that Shakspere had conceived an ambition to found a family; but he was doomed to disappointment in this respect, for his only son died in the same year his father applied for the coat-of-arms.

In 1597 Shakspere bought an excellent dwelling at Stratford, known as New Place, for the sum of £60. It is evident that he had retained his interest in his native town and was planning to return there to live at some future time. This interest in Stratford is attested by a letter dated 1598 from Master Abraham Sturley to Richard Quiney (father of Shakspere's future son-in-law). Mr. Quiney is in London soliciting certain favors for the town of Stratford, and Mr. Sturley suggests that he will succeed through Mr.

Shakspere's social influence. Later in the year we have a letter from Quiney to Shakspere (the only letter to the poet still in existence) begging a loan of £30. Further evidence of Shakspere's financial prosperity would hardly be required; but we know from records that in this year he was an owner of corn and malt at Stratford, and paid taxes of £15 13s. 4d. in St. Helen's parish, Bishopsgate, London.

## Success as a Dramatist

We have no specific mention of any of Shakspere's plays until 1597. In that year *Richard II.*, *Richard III.*, and *Romeo and Juliet* were printed. The following year Francis Meres in his *Palladis Tamia, Wit's Treasury*, mentions twelve plays by Shakspere, and refers to his "sugred sonnets among his private friends." From this time on pirated and other editions of the plays follow in rapid succession.

It is clear that the five years following 1592 had been crowded with literary work; but in those days a play was usually the property of the company which produced it, and unless it was very remarkable did not bring the author into particular notice. Shakspere was an actor, and finally became a manager. When his ability as a writer of plays was discovered, it is not unnatural that it was frequently called into requisition by the managers of the company to which he belonged. Apparently, however, his plays did not attract particular attention outside the green-room circle until the production of *Romeo and Juliet* in the autumn

of 1596. Early in the next year this play was published in quarto "as it hath been often, with great applause plaid publiquely by the right Honourable the L of Hunsdon his servants." Now Henry Lord Hunsdon, who was Lord Chamberlain until his death, died July 22, 1596, and his son George Lord Hunsdon, was appointed Chamberlain in April, 1597. At any other time than between these two dates the players would have been spoken of as "the Lord Chamberlain's servants." The natural conclusion to be drawn, therefore, is that *Romeo and Juliet* was produced in the autumn of 1596, and had such a run that some publisher was tempted to print it. Moreover, it was doubtless this burst of popularity which called forth the reference by Meres already spoken of. In 1598 he wrote: "As Plautus and Seneca are accounted the best for Comedy and Tragedy among the Latines, so Shakspere among the English is most excellent in both kinds for the stage: for Comedy, witness his Gentlemen of Verona, his Love labours lost, his Love labours wonne, his Midsummers night dreame, and his Merchant of Venice; for Tragedy, his Richard the 2, Richard the 3, Henry the 4, King John, Titus Andronicus, and his Romeo and Juliet." We can only conjecture what "Love labours wonne" refers to. Perhaps it was *All's Well that Ends Well.*

## Period of His Greatest Plays

*Romeo and Juliet* and *The Merchant of Venice* were probably produced in the same year, and mark the transition from the first period of his production to

the second. Such plays as *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *A Comedy of Errors*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* are light and graceful, but present no great or striking characters. They are full of rhymes, puns, and plays upon words. These formed the fashionable wit of the period. To us it is somewhat tame, and we see that fashions lose their flavor. In so far as Shakspere catered to the times, his plays are things of the past. But like every successful workman, he began by doing better than others what others about him were doing.

In the two plays mentioned above as marking his transition to something better, we find the same puns and rhymes, and *Romeo and Juliet* has traces of bombast; but we find also for the first time strong characters. Shakspere was beginning to feel his powers, no doubt unconsciously; and the popular success was probably as great a surprise to himself as to any one else. But he at once rose to the opportunity which his unexpected success had presented and, throwing off much of the cheap wit and the cheap methods of the stage of that day, he poured himself out in a series of great and striking characters.

## Secret of Shakspere's Greatness

Shakspere's peculiar greatness is only partially due to an inspired gift of language; for though he is a master of language in his broad grasp and power of expression, he often indulges in bombast and a cheap twittering in which we must confess there is no poetry

whatever, even if it did come from the pen of the greatest of poets. Nor is his especial greatness to be found in his literary skill and felicity in plot construction. Shakspere is so great because he has created so many great men and women. Hamlet is a great man; Portia is a great woman; Macbeth, Iago, Lear, Brutus and Cæsar, Anthony and Cleopatra, all impress us with their power. It is easy to create ordinary men and women; only a truly great man can create a great man or woman. In all literature we have no greater characters than those Shakspere has given us, and that is why we call him the greatest of writers.

### Shakspere as an Actor

Shakspere, poet and dramatist though he was, clung to his profession through nearly the entire period of his greatest success as an author, and continued to act not only in his own plays, but in those of others. In 1598 we know that he acted in Ben Jonson's first comedy, *Every Man in his Humour*. Again in 1603 we find him in the list of actors in Jonson's *Sejanus*. *Hamlet*, *Julius Cæsar*, and other great and successful plays had already appeared; yet at the zenith of his reputation we see that he is still attending to his regular business.

In 1602 he purchased for £320 one hundred and seven acres in the parish of Old Stratford and later in the year a smaller property. In 1605 he bought for £440 the unexpired lease of the tithes of Stratford, Old Stratford, Bishopton, and Welcombe. And there

is evidence that during this entire time he was engaged in a malt business.

### Later Years

It is probable that Shakspere had some interest in the Globe theatre, and perhaps acted as manager, and subsequently derived an income from it. We presume that about 1612 he left London and went to live at Stratford. In 1613 he bought a house near Blackfriars Theatre and leased it to a tenant for ten years. In 1614 we find him protesting against the enclosure of common lands near Stratford, declaring that "he was not able to bear the enclosure of Welcombe." March 25, 1616, he executed his will, and in less than a month he had died. The Vicar of Stratford noted fifty years later that "Shakspere, Drayton, and Ben Jonson had a merry meeting, and it seems drank too hard, for Shakspere died of a fever there contracted." Whether this is myth or history it would be hard to say; but scandalous gossip, we may be certain, never grows less in fifty years.

In his will the greater part of his property was left to his eldest daughter, Susanna Hall, and her husband. To his wife he left only his "second best bed;" a bequest by no means insulting, for she had a widow's dower rights, which must have amply provided for her without any specific bequest in the will.

His daughter Susanna had a daughter Elizabeth, who married a Mr. Nash and was Shakspere's last living descendant.

## Likenesses of the Poet

Shakspere was buried in the parish church at Stratford, and a few years later a bust was erected, supposed to have been modelled from a death-mask. It was colored originally—the eyes hazel, the hair and beard auburn. On the flat stone above his grave may be read the following inscription, said to have been written by Shakspere himself:

"Good frend, for Jesus sake forbeare
To digg the dust enclosed heare,
Bleste be the man that spares thes stones,
And curst be he that moves my bones."

The first collected edition of Shakspere's works, published seven years after his death, has a portrait engraved by Droeshout. This engraving and the bust are the only two likenesses of which we can be certain; but there is a painting in the National Portrait Gallery in London which is generally regarded as an authentic likeness. It is the so-called Chandos portrait, and represents the poet with a full pointed beard. It represents a more delicate and sensitive face than either the bust or the engraving, and by popular choice this has been fixed upon as the true face of Shakspere.

## Works

The first collected edition of Shakspere's works was the "Folio of 1623," set forth by his "friends" and "fellows" John Heminge and Henry Condell. However, some of the separate plays had previously been

published in quarto form, as the dates given below will indicate. The copy for many of these quartos was either stolen or obtained by reporters sent to the theatre to take down the speeches as they were delivered.

Much time and effort have been devoted by Shakspere scholars to determining the dates of his plays. Moreover, various plays have been attributed to Shakspere on which grave doubt has been thrown. Much of this work has doubtless been futile and the results are not to be trusted. Certain dates, however, are fixed by contemporary references, and to the ordinary mind these are quite sufficient.

The first of these dates is 1592. We are safe in supposing that previous to that time Shakspere devoted his dramatic talents chiefly to remodelling old plays. Of these, internal evidence leads us to suppose that we have examples in *Titus Andronicus*, and *I Henry VI.*, published in 1600; again 1611; perhaps in 1594; retouched by Shakspere before 1592.

Next we have the comedies and histories mentioned by Meres in 1598, three of which had been published in 1597. These are:

| | FIRST PUBLISHED |
|---|---|
| Love's Labour's Lost | 1598 |
| Comedy of Errors | 1623 |
| Two Gentlemen of Verona | 1623 |
| A Midsummer Night's Dream | 1600 |
| 2 & 3 Henry VI | 1623 |
| Richard II | 1597 |
| Richard III | 1597 |

| | FIRST PUBLISHED |
|---|---|
| King John | 1623 |
| Merchant of Venice | 1600 |
| Romeo and Juliet—1597 (pirated) | 1599 |

The last is a tragedy and marks the transition to the next period. (In the following list the dates affixed to the titles are those given by Professor Dowden for the writing of the plays):

| | |
|---|---|
| **HISTORY** | |
| 1 & 2 Henry IV—1597-8 (1st) 1598; (2nd) | 1600 |
| (pirated) | 1600 |
| **COMEDY** | |
| Taming of the Shrew—1597? | 1623 |
| Merry Wives of Windsor—1598? | 1602 |
| Much Ado About Nothing—1598 | 1600 |
| As You Like It—1599 | 1623 |
| Twelfth Night—1600-1 | 1623 |
| All's Well That Ends Well—1601-2? | 1623 |
| Measure for Measure—1603 | 1623 |
| Troilus and Cressida—1603?; revised 1607? | 1609 |
| **TRAGEDY** | |
| Julius Cæsar—1601 | 1623 |
| Hamlet—1602; 1603 (pirated) | 1604 |
| Othello—1604 | 1622 |
| King Lear—1605 | 1608 |
| Macbeth—1606 | 1623 |
| Antony and Cleopatra—1607 | 1623 |
| Coriolanus—1608 | 1623 |
| Timon of Athens—1607-8 | 1623 |

| | FIRST PUBLISHED |
|---|---|
| ROMANCES | |
| Pericles—1608 | 1609 |
| Cymbeline—1609 | 1623 |
| The Tempest—1610 | 1623 |
| A Winter's Tale—1610-11 | 1623 |
| FRAGMENTS | |
| Two Noble Kinsmen—1612 | 1623 |
| Henry VIII—1612-13 | 1623 |
| POEMS | |
| Venus and Adonis—1592? | 1593 |
| Lucrece—1593-4 | 1594 |
| Sonnets—1595-1605? | 1609 |

A careful study of Shakspere's plays in the order indicated above will reveal the progress of his skill and the development of his nature and character. The first comedies are light and clever, and in form and manner not much out of the range of other comedies of the period. The histories show substantial workmanship, but with the exception of *Richard III* no very remarkable characters.

In *Romeo and Juliet* we have the introduction of tragedy, and with it Shakspere's greatest characters. His later comedies also show the breadth and range of his thought and feeling and his grasp of every phase of life. This was his period of thought, of passionate feeling, of greatest mental energy.

The romances are his later work. The struggles and sufferings of life passed, and success won, he seems to rise lightly and confidently above all that would

drag us down. We have the view of life of a man who looks on it from the height of success. These are by no means Shakspere's greatest plays. They have not the strength, the energy, and depth of the tragedies and comedies of the middle period. They are, however, from the artistic point of view, more nearly perfect; and they breathe the confident spirit of the man who has succeeded and has the right to speak from the point of view of success.

### Originality

Though we may boldly say that Shakspere is the one great original English writer, yet he borrowed his plots, and even many of his phrases, from other writers. He freely used the worthless plays of those who had gone before him, and there is scarcely a plot that was not derived from some romance or history accessible to him in English. Yet in none of these do we find the character of Hamlet or Portia or Iago or Lear. In giving us these he gave us what no one else could give.

Sherwin Cody

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Note.—It is to be hoped that no hasty critic will regard the following selection as "a desecration of the sacred bard," and recall the well worn dictum that "any one not able to read Shakspere's plays complete ought to let them alone." The Editor feels that the real joy this book will give to those who read it in the right spirit, even if the plays have previously been read many times, will fully justify its existence, and to the beginner they will be an easy introduction to the greatest of all authors.

# THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

## *INTRODUCTION*

*The Merchant of Venice* is Shakspere's most popular comedy, and contains two of his best known characters. Portia has been a favorite role with the great actresses of two centuries, and Shylock of the great actors from Kean to Booth and Irving. Though called a comedy, the play has more in it than any other of his comedies, and the outcome was certainly tragic to Shylock.

The plot is a union of two well-known Italian stories, the "Story of the Bond," or the "pound of flesh," and the "Story of the Caskets," by means of which Portia's husband was selected.

Christopher Marlowe, the first great Elizabethan dramatist, also wrote a play like this entitled "The Jew of Malta," which Shakspere had seen. Though he had been greatly influenced by Marlowe's lofty style, the "Merchant" owes little to his play. Shakspere's Jew is a much greater character than Marlowe's. Says Charles Lamb in an interesting criticism, "Shylock, in the midst of his savage purpose, is a man. His motives, feelings, resentments, have something human in them. Barrabas (in Marlowe's play) is a mere monster, brought in with a large painted nose to please the rabble. He kills in sport, poisons whole nunneries, invents infernal machines. He is just such an exhibition as, a century or two earlier, might have been

played before the Londoners *by the Royal Command*, when a general pillage and massacre of the Hebrews had been resolved by the Cabinet."

Some have thought the play should have been named "Shylock," since he is the dominating character, and Antonio, the "Merchant," is merely the passive object of the Jew's revenge, and does nothing himself. The fact is, however, he is the logical centre about which the whole plot revolves.

## *DRAMATIS PERSONÆ*

The Duke of Venice
The Prince of Morocco } suitors to Portia
The Prince of Arragon }
Antonio, a merchant of Venice
Bassanio, his friend, suitor likewise to Portia
Salanio }
Salarino } friends to Antonio and Bassanio
Gratiano }
Salerio }
Lorenzo, in love with Jessica
Shylock, a rich Jew
Tubal, a Jew, his friend
Launcelot Gobbo, the clown, servant to Shylock
Old Gobbo, father to Launcelot
Leonardo, servant to Bassanio
Balthasar } servants to Portia
Stephano }
Portia, a rich heiress
Nerissa, her waiting-maid
Jessica, daughter to Shylock

Magnificoes of Venice, officers of the Court of Justice, Gaoler, Servants to Portia, and other Attendants

SCENE: *Partly at Venice, and partly at Belmont, the seat of Portia, on the Continent.*

## *ACT I*

SCENE 1. As the curtain rises we see Antonio surrounded by some of his friends. He is sad, he knows not why,—perhaps it is a presage of coming events.

Presently his noble friend Bassanio appears, and when some of the others have left Bassanio asks Antonio delicately to lend him some money that he may go and make suit in proper style to the rich and beautiful Portia, who lives at Belmont. Antonio replies,—

*Ant.* Thou knowst that all my fortunes are at sea;
Neither have I money, or commodity
To raise a present sum: therefore, go forth;
Try what my credit can in Venice do:
That shall be rack'd, even to the uttermost,
To furnish thee to Belmont, to fair Portia.
Go, presently inquire, and so will I,
Where money is, and I no question make
To have it of my trust or for my sake. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE 2. *Belmont. A Room in Portia's House.*
*Enter* Portia *and* Nerissa.

*Por.* By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is aweary of this great world.

*Ner.* You would be, sweet madam, if your miseries

were in the same abundance as your good fortunes are; and yet, for aught I see, they are as sick that surfeit with too much as they that starve with nothing. It is no small happiness, therefore, be seated in the mean: superfluity comes sooner by white hairs, but competency lives longer.

*Por.* Good sentences and well pronounced.

*Ner.* They would be better, if well followed.

*Por.* If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches and poor men's cottages princes' palaces. It is a good divine that follows his own instructions: I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done, than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching. The brain may devise laws for the blood, but a hot temper leaps o'er a cold decree: such a hare is madness the youth, to skip o'er the meshes of good counsel the cripple. But this reasoning is not in the fashion to choose me a husband. O me, the word 'choose'! I may neither choose whom I would nor refuse whom I dislike; so is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I cannot choose one nor refuse none?

By the provisions of the will of Portia's father, three caskets have been provided, one of lead, one of silver, and one of gold, and she is to marry that one of her suitors who chooses the right casket.

Nerissa names over the suitors to see which Portia prefers, but she makes fun of them all until Nerissa asks,—

*Ner.* Do you not remember, lady, in your father's time, a Venetian, a scholar, and a soldier, that came hither in company of the Marquis of Montferrat?

*Por.* Yes, yes, it was Bassanio; as I think he was so called.

*Ner.* True, madam: he, of all the men that ever my foolish eyes looked upon, was the best deserving a fair lady.

*Por.* I remember him well; and I remember him worthy of thy praise.

SCENE 3. *A Public Place.*

*Enter* Bassanio *and* Shylock.

*Shy.* Three thousand ducats; well.

*Bass.* Ay, sir, for three months.

*Shy.* For three months; well.

*Bass.* For the which, as I told you, Antonio shall be bound.

*Shy.* Antonio shall become bound; well.

*Bass.* May you stead me? will you pleasure me? shall I know your answer?

*Shy.* Three thousand ducats for three months and Antonio bound.

*Bass.* Your answer to that.

*Shy.* Antonio is a good man.

*Bass.* Have you heard any imputation to the contrary?

*Shy.* Oh, no, no, no, no: my meaning in saying he is a good man is to have you understand me that he is sufficient. Yet his means are in supposition: he hath an argosy bound to Tripolis, another to the

Indies; I understand, moreover, upon the Rialto he hath a third at Mexico, a fourth for England, and other ventures he hath, squandered abroad. But ships are but boards, sailors but men: there be land-rats and water-rats, water-thieves and land-thieves—I mean pirates: and then there is the peril of waters, winds and rocks. The man is, notwithstanding, sufficient. Three thousand ducats; I think I may take his bond.

*Bass.* Be assured you may.

*Shy.* I will be assured I may; and, that I may be assured I will bethink me. May I speak with Antonio?

*Bass.* If it please you to dine with us.

*Shy.* Yes, to smell pork; to eat of the habitation which your prophet the Nazarite conjured the Devil into. I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following, but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you. What news on the Rialto?—who is he comes here?

*Enter* Antonio.

*Bass.* This is Signior Antonio.

*Shy.* [*Aside*] How like a fawning publican he looks!
I hate him for he is a Christian;
But more for that in low simplicity
He lends out money gratis and brings down
The rate of usance here with us in Venice.
If I can catch him once upon the hip
I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.
He hates our sacred nation; and he rails,
Even there where merchants most do congregate,

On me, my bargains, and my well-won thrift,
Which he calls interest. Cursed be my tribe,
If I forgive him!

After some fencing, Antonio asks,—

*Ant.* Well, Shylock, shall we be beholding to you?

*Shy.* Signior Antonio, many a time and oft
In the Rialto you have rated me
About my moneys and my usances;
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug,
For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe.
You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog,
And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine,
And all for use of that which is mine own.
Well then, it now appears you need my help:
Go to, then; you come to me, and you say
'Shylock, we would have moneys: you say so;
You, that did void your rheum upon my beard
And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur
Over your threshold; moneys is your suit.
What should I say to you? Should I not say
'Hath a dog money? is it possible
A cur can lend three thousand ducats?' Or
Shall I bend low and in a bondman's key
With bated breath and whispering humbleness.
Say this:
'Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last;
You spurn'd me such a day; another time
You called me dog; and for these courtesies
I'll lend you thus much moneys?'

*Ant.* I am as like to call thee so again,
To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too.
If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not

As to thy friends; for when did friendship take
A breed for barren metal of his friend?
But lend it rather to thine enemy,
Who, if he break, thou mayst with better face
Exact the penalty.

*Shy.* Why, look you, how you storm!
I would be friends with you and have your love,
Forget the shames that you have stain'd me with,
Supply your present wants and take no doit
Of usance for my moneys, and you'll not hear me:
This is kind I offer.

*Bass.* This were kindness.

*Shy.* This kindness will I show.
Go with me to a notary, seal me there
Your single bond; and in a merry sport,
If you repay me not on such a day,
In such a place, such sum or sums as are
Express'd in the condition, let the forfeit
Be nominated for an equal pound
Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken
In what part of your body pleaseth me.

Antonio says he'll gladly do it, and adds "There is much kindness in the Jew." Bassanio protests, and says Antonio shall take no such risk for him. But so it is settled.

## *ACT II*

Scene 1. The Prince of Morocco, the first of Portia's suitors, appears at Belmont to try his fortune with the caskets.

Scene 2. Launcelot Gobbo, the jester of the play who has been servant to the Jew, but is about to be-

come servant to Bassanio, has a merry talk with his father about his fortunes in the world. In this scene the over-talkative Gratiano appears with Bassanio and begs to accompany the latter to Belmont. They arrange for a farewell supper that evening, to include all their friends.

SCENE 3. *A Room in the Jew's House.*

*Enter his daughter* Jessica *and Launcelot.*

*Jes.* I am sorry thou wilt leave my father so:
Our house is hell; and thou, a merry devil,
Didst rob it of some taste of tediousness.
But fare thee well; there is a ducat for thee:
And, Launcelot, soon at supper shalt thou see
Lorenzo, who is thy new master's guest:
Give him this letter; do it secretly;
And so farewell: I would not have my father
See me in talk with thee.

*Laun.* Adieu! tears exhibit my tongue. Most beautiful pagan, most sweet Jew! if a Christian did not play the knave, and get thee, I am much deceived. But, adieu: these foolish drops do something drown my manly spirit: adieu.

*Jes.* Farewell, good Launcelot. [*Exit Launcelot*]
Alack, what heinous sin is it in me
To be ashamed to be my father's child!
But though I am a daughter to his blood,
I am not to his manners. O Lorenzo,
If thou keep promise, I shall end this strife,
Become a Christian, and thy loving wife.

(Lorenzo is one of the boon companions of Antonio and Bassanio.)

SCENE 4. *A Street.* A letter is brought to Lorenzo, and when the other friends are gone Lorenzo confesses to his friend Gratiano.

*Lor.* I must needs tell thee all. She hath directed
How I shall take her from her father's house;
What gold and jewels she is furnish'd with;
What page's suit she hath in readiness.
If e'er the Jew her father come to heaven,
It will be for his gentle daughter's sake:
And never dare misfortune cross her foot,
Unless she do it under this excuse,
That she is issue to a faithless Jew.
Come, go with me; peruse this as thou goest:
Fair Jessica shall be my torch bearer. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE 5. Shylock leaves his keys with Jessica, and just then Launcelot calls out to Jessica as he runs away, "Mistress, look out at window, for all this,
There will come a Christian by,
Will be worth a Jewess's eye."

SCENE 6. Gratiano and other masqueraders come by, and presently Lorenzo appears, and Jessica is seen in boy's clothes at an upper window. After she has greeted her lover she calls out—

*Jes.* Here, catch this casket; it is worth the pains.
I am glad 'tis night, you do not look on me,
For I am much ashamed of my exchange:
But love is blind and lovers cannot see
The pretty follies that themselves commit;
For if they could, Cupid himself would blush
To see me thus transformèd to a boy.

*Lor.* Descend, for you must be my torch-bearer.

*Jes.* What, must I hold a candle to my shames?
They in themselves, good sooth, are too too light.
But she goes just the same.

Antonio appears to say that the wind is fair and Bassanio will be off that night for Belmont.

Scene 7. We are at Belmont again, and the Prince of Morocco is making his choice of the caskets. On each there is an inscription, which the Prince reads.

*Mor.* The first, of gold, who this inscription bears,
'Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire;'
The second, silver, which this promise carries,
'Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves;'
This third, dull lead, with warning all as blunt,
'Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.'
How shall I know if I do choose the right?

After mulling the matter a long time he decides on the golden casket, saying, "If thy form lie there, then I am yours."

He unlocks the golden casket.

*Mor.* O hell! what have we here?
A carrion Death, within whose empty eye
There is a written scroll! I'll read the writing.
[*Reads*] All that glisters is not gold;
Often have you heard that told;
Many a man his life hath sold
But my outside to behold:

Gilded tombs do worms infold.
Had you been as wise as bold,
Young in limbs, in judgment old,
Your answer had not been inscroll'd:
Fare you well; your suit is cold.
Cold, indeed; and labour lost:
Then, farewell, heat, and welcome, frost!
Portia, adieu. I have too grieved a heart
To take a tedious leave; thus losers part.

[*Exit with his train. Flourish of cornets.*

*Por.* A gentle riddance. Draw the curtains, go.
Let all of his complexion choose me so. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE 8. *A Street in Venice.* Salanio is telling Salarino how the Jew behaved when he found that his daughter Jessica had gone and taken his jewels and ducats along.

*Salan.* I never heard a passion so confused.
So strange, outrageous, and so variable,
As the dog Jew did utter in the streets:
'My daughter! O my ducats! O my daughter!
Fled with a Christian! O my Christian ducats!
Justice! the law! my ducats, and my daughter!
A sealed bag, two sealed bags of ducats,
Of double ducats, stolen from me by my daughter!
And jewels, two stones, two rich and precious stones,
Stolen by my daughter! Justice! find the girl!
She hath the stones upon her, and the ducats!'

*Salar.* Why, all the boys in Venice follow him,
Crying, his stones, his daughter, and his ducats.

*Salan.* Let good Antonio look he keep his day,
Or he shall pay for this.

SCENE 9. *Belmont* again. The Prince of Arragon comes to make his choice of the caskets for Portia's hand.

*Por.* Behold, there stand the caskets, noble prince:
If you choose that wherein I am contain'd,
Straight shall our nuptial rites be solemnized:
But if you fail, without more speech, my lord,
You must be gone from hence immediately.

*Ar.* I am enjoin'd by oath to observe three things:
First, never to unfold to any one
Which casket 'twas I chose; next, if I fail
Of the right casket, never in my life
To woo a maid in way of marriage;
Lastly,
If I do fail in fortune of my choice,
Immediately to leave you and be gone.

*Por.* To these injunctions every one doth swear
That comes to hazard for my worthless self.

He muses a long time, finally choosing the silver casket, and when he opens it finds the portrait of a blinking idiot. He finds a scroll and

[*Reads*] The fire seven times tried this:
Seven times tried that judgment is
That did never choose amiss.
Some there be that shadows kiss;
Such have but a shadow's bliss:
There be fools alive, I wis,
Silver'd o'er; and so was this.
Take what wife you will to bed,

I will ever be your head:
So be gone: you are sped.
Still more fool I shall appear
By the time I linger here;
With one fool's head I came to woo,
But I go away with two.
Sweet, adieu. I'll keep my oath,
Patiently to bear my wroth.
[*Exeunt Arragon and train.*

*Por.* Thus hath the candle singed the moth.
O, these deliberate fools! when they do choose
They have the wisdom by their wit to lose.
*Ner.* The ancient saying is no heresy,
Hanging and wiving goes by destiny.
*Por.* Come, draw the curtain, Nerissa.

*Enter a Servant.*

*Serv.* Where is my lady?
*Por.* Here: what would my lord?
*Serv.* Madam, there is alighted at your gate
A young Venetian, one that comes before
To signify the approaching of his lord;
From whom he bringeth sensible regrets,
To wit, besides commends and courteous breath,
Gifts of rich value. Yet I have not seen
So likely an ambassador of love:
A day in April never came so sweet,
To show how costly summer was at hand,
As this fore-spurrer comes before his lord.
*Por.* No more, I pray thee: I am half afeared
Thou wilt say anon he is some kin to thee,
Thou spend'st such high-day wit in praising him.

Come, come, Nerissa; for I long to see
Quick Cupid's post that comes so mannerly.

*Ner.* Bassanio, lord Love, if thy will it be!

[*Exeunt.*

## *ACT III*

Scene 1. *A Street in Venice.* There is news on the Rialto that Antonio has lost ships in storms at sea.

Shylock enters, bitter and sarcastic, talking of his daughter. Then Salarino mentions Antonio, refers to the bond, and asks Shylock what is the use of the pound of flesh should he take it. Shylock answers in bitter humor,—

*Shy.* To bait fish withal: if it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge. He hath disgraced me, and hindered me half a million; laughed at my losses, mocked at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies; and what's his reason? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, sense, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? if you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poison us, do we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? if we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? Revenge.

If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? Why, revenge. The villainy you teach me, I will execute; and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.

(And so he storms, of his daughter and of Antonio.)

SCENE 2. *Belmont. A room in Portia's house. Enter* Bassanio, Portia, Gratiano, Nerissa, *and Attendants.*

*Por.* I pray you, tarry: pause a day or two
Before you hazard; for, in choosing wrong,
I lose your company: therefore forbear awhile.
There's something tells me, but it is not love,
I would not lose you; and you know yourself,
Hate counsels not in such a quality.

*Bass.* Let me choose;
For as I am, I live upon the rack.

*Por.* Upon the rack, Bassanio! then confess
What treason there is mingled with your love.

*Bass.* None but that ugly treason of mistrust,
Which makes me fear the enjoying of my love:
But let me to my fortune and the caskets.

*Por.* Away, then! I am lock'd in one of them:
If you do love me, you will find me out.
Nerissa and the rest, stand all aloof.
Let music sound while he doth make his choice;
Then, if he lose, he makes a swan-like end,
Fading in music: . . . . . .
Go, Hercules!
Live thou, I live: with much much more dismay
I view the fight than thou that makest the fray.

*Music whilst* Bassanio *comments on the caskets to himself.*

SONG

Tell me where is fancy bred,
Or in the heart or in the head?
How begot, how nourished?
Reply, reply.
It is engender'd in the eyes,
With gazing fed; and fancy dies
In the cradle where it lies.
Let us all ring fancy's knell;
I'll begin it.—Ding, dong, bell.

*All.* Ding, dong, bell.

*Bass.* So may the outward shows be least themselves:
The world is still deceived with ornament.
In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt,
But, being season'd with a gracious voice,
Obscures the show of evil? In religion,
What damned error, but some sober brow
Will bless it, and approve it with a text,
Hiding the grossness with fair ornament?
Thus ornament is but the guilèd shore
To a most dangerous sea; the beauteous scarf
Veiling an Indian beauty; in a word
The seeming truth which cunning times put on
To entrap the wisest. Therefore, thou gaudy gold,
Hard food for Midas, I will none of thee;
Nor none of thee, thou pale and common drudge
'Tween man and man: but thou, thou meagre lead,
Which rather threatenest than dost promise aught,
Thy paleness moves me more than eloquence;
And here choose I: joy be the consequence!

*Por.* [*Aside*] How all the other passions fleet to air,
As doubtful thoughts, and rash-embraced despair,
And shuddering fear, and green-eyed jealousy!
O love, be moderate; allay thy ecstasy;
In measure rein thy joy; scant this excess!
I feel too much thy blessing: make it less,
For fear I surfeit!

*Bass.* What find I here?
[*Opening the leaden casket.*
Fair Portia's counterfeit! What demi-god
Hath come so near creation?
Here's the scroll,
The continent and summary of my fortune.
[*Reads*] You that choose not by the view,
Chance as fair, and choose as true!
Since this fortune falls to you,
Be content and seek no new.
If you be well pleased with this,
And hold your fortune for your bliss,
Turn you where your lady is,
And claim her with a loving kiss.
A gentle scroll. Fair lady, by your leave;
I come by note, to give and to receive.
Like one of two contending in a prize,
That thinks he hath done well in people's eyes,
Hearing applause and universal shout,
Giddy in spirit, still gazing in a doubt
Whether those peals of praise be his or no;
So, thrice-fair lady, stand I, even so;
As doubtful whether what I see be true,
Until confirm'd, sign'd, ratified by you.

*Por.* You see me, Lord Bassanio, where I stand,
Such as I am: though for myself alone
I would not be ambitious in my wish,
To wish myself much better; yet, for you
I would be trebled twenty times myself;
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times
More rich;
That only to stand high in your account,
I might in virtues, beauties, livings, friends,
Exceed account; but the full sum of me
Is sum of something, which, to term in gross,
Is an unlesson'd girl, unschool'd, unpracticed;
Happy in this, she is not yet so old
But she may learn; happier than this,
She is not bred so dull but she can learn;
Happiest of all, in that her gentle spirit
Commits itself to yours, to be directed,
As from her lord, her governor, her king.
Myself and what is mine to you and yours
Is now converted: but now I was the lord
Of this fair mansion, master of my servants,
Queen o'er myself; and even now, but now,
This house, these servants, and this same myself,
Are yours, my lord: I give them with this ring;
Which when you part from, lose, or give away,
Let it presage the ruin of your love,
And be my vantage to exclaim on you.

*Bass.* Madam, you have bereft me of all words;
Only my blood speaks to you in my veins;
And there is such confusion in my powers,
As, after some oration fairly spoke

By a belovèd prince, there doth appear
Among the buzzing pleasèd multitude;
Where every something, being blent together,
Turns to a wild of nothing, save of joy,
Express'd and not express'd. But when this ring
Parts from this finger, then parts life from hence:
O, then be bold to say Bassanio's dead!

Then Nerissa and Gratiano speak up and say they have improved the time in making love themselves, and crave a blessing on their union.

It is indeed Lorenzo and Jessica who are to remain at Portia's house during the ensuing scenes.

A moment later Bassanio is handed a letter telling him that Antonio's bond is forfeited to the Jew. Portia bids her new-wed husband pay the Jew treble the amount if need be from her fortune, and Bassanio immediately leaves with his train for Venice.

SCENE 3. *A Street in Venice.*

*Enter* Shylock, Salarino, Antonio, *and* Gaoler.

*Shy.* Gaoler, look to him; tell not me of mercy;
This is the fool that lent out money gratis:
Gaoler, look to him.

*Ant.* Hear me yet, good Shylock.

*Shy.* I'll have my bond; speak not against my bond;
I have sworn an oath that I will have my bond.
Thou call'dst me dog before thou hadst a cause;
But, since I am a dog, beware my fangs:
The Duke shall grant me justice. I do wonder,
Thou naughty gaoler, that thou art so fond
To come abroad with him at his request.

*Ant.* I pray thee, hear me speak.

*Shy.* I'll have my bond; I will not hear thee speak:
I'll have my bond; and therefore speak no more.
I'll not be made a soft and dull-eyed fool,
To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yield
To Christian intercessors. Follow not;
I'll have no speaking; I will have my bond.
[*Exit.*

*Salar.* It is the most impenetrable cur
That ever kept with men.

*Ant.* Let him alone:
I'll follow him no more with bootless prayers.
He seeks my life; his reason well I know:
I oft deliver'd from his forfeitures
Many that have at times made moan to me;
Therefore he hates me.

*Salar.* I am sure the Duke
Will never grant this forfeiture to hold.

*Ant.* The Duke can not deny the course of law:
For the commodity that strangers have
With us in Venice, if it be denied,
Will much impeach the justice of his state;
Since that the trade and profit of the city
Consisteth of all nations. Therefore, go:
These griefs and losses have so bated me
That I shall hardly spare a pound of flesh
To-morrow to my bloody creditor.
Well, gaoler, on. Pray God, Bassanio come
To see me pay his debt, and then I care not!
[*Exeunt.*

Scene 4. *At Belmont.* Portia arranges to leave her house in charge of Lorenzo and Jessica, sends a mes-

senger in haste to Bellario, a learned doctor of the law at Padua, and tells Nerissa she will make the better man of the two when they are accoutred like young men.

Scene 5. Another quiet scene at Belmont, full of amusing talk between Launcelot the fool, Jessica, and Lorenzo.

## *ACT IV*

### Scene 1. *Venice. A Court of Justice.*

*Enter the* Duke, *the* Magnificoes, Antonio, Bassanio, Gratiano, Salerio, *and others.*

*Duke.* What, is Antonio here?

*Ant.* Ready, so please your grace.

*Duke.* I am sorry for thee: thou art come to answer
A stony adversary, an inhuman wretch
Uncapable of pity, void and empty
From any dram of mercy.

*Ant.* I have heard
Your grace hath ta'en great pains to qualify
His rigorous course; but since he stands obdurate
And that no lawful means can carry me
Out of his envy's reach, I do oppose
My patience to his fury, and am arm'd
To suffer, with a quietness of spirit,
The very tyranny and rage of his.

*Duke.* Go one, and call the Jew into the court.

*Saler.* He is ready at the door: he comes, my lord.

*Enter Shylock.*

*Duke.* Make room, and let him stand before our face.
Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too,

That thou but lead'st this fashion of thy malice
To the last hour of act; and then 'tis thought
Thou'lt show thy mercy and remorse more strange
Than is thy strange apparent cruelty!
And where thou now exact'st the penalty,
Which is a pound of this poor merchant's flesh,
Thou wilt not only lose the forfeiture,
But, touch'd with human gentleness and love,
Forgive a moiety of the principal:
Glancing an eye of pity on his losses,
That have of late so huddled on his back,
Enow to press a royal merchant down
And pluck commiseration of his state
From brassy bosoms and rough hearts of flint,
From stubborn Turks and Tartars, never train'd
To offices of tender courtesy.
We all expect a gentle answer, Jew.

*Shy.* I have possess'd your grace of what I purpose;
And by our holy Sabbath have I sworn
To have the due and forfeit of my bond:
If you deny it, let the danger light
Upon your charter and your city's freedom.
You'll ask me, why I rather choose to have
A weight of carrion flesh than to receive
Three thousand ducats: I'll not answer that:
But, say, it is my humour: is it answer'd?
What if my house be troubled with a rat
And I be pleased to give ten thousand ducats
To have it baned? What, are you answer'd yet?
Some men there are love not a gaping pig;
Some, that are mad if they behold a cat;

And others, when the bagpipe sings i' the nose,
Cannot contain themselves; for affection,
Mistress of passion, sways it to the mood
Of what it likes or loathes. Now, for your answer:
As there is no firm reason to be render'd,
Why he cannot abide a gaping pig;
Why he, a harmless necessary cat;
Why he, a wauling bag-pipe; but of force
Must yield to such inevitable shame
As to offend, himself offended;
So can I give no reason, nor I will not
More than a lodged hate and a certain loathing
I bear Antonio, that I follow thus
A losing suit against him. Are you answer'd?

*Bass.* This is no answer, thou unfeeling man,
To excuse the current of thy cruelty.

*Shy.* I am not bound to please thee with my answers.

*Bass.* Do all men kill the things they do not love?

*Shy.* Hates any man the thing he would not kill?

*Bass.* Every offense is not a hate at first.

*Shy.* What, wouldst thou have a serpent sting thee twice?

*Ant.* I pray you, think you question with the Jew:
You may as well go stand upon the beach
And bid the main flood bate his usual height;
You may as well use question with the wolf
Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb;
You may as well forbid the mountain pines
To wag their high tops and to make no noise,
When they are fretten with the gusts of heaven;

You may as well do anything most hard,
As seek to soften that—than which what's harder?—
His Jewish heart; therefore, I do beseech you,
Make no more offers, use no farther means,
But with all brief and plain conveniency
Let me have judgment and the Jew his will.

*Bass.* For thy three thousand ducats here is six.

*Shy.* If every ducat in six thousand ducats
Were in six parts and every part a ducat,
I would not draw them; I would have my bond.

*Enter* Portia, *dressed like a doctor of laws.*

*Duke.* Give me your hand. Came you from old Bellario?

*Por.* I did, my lord.

*Duke.* You are welcome; take your place.
Are you acquainted with the difference
That holds this present question in the court?

*Por.* I am informed thoroughly of the cause.
Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew?

*Duke.* Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth.

*Por.* Is your name Shylock?

*Shy.* Shylock is my name.

*Por.* Of a strange nature is the suit you follow;
Yet in such rule that the Venetian law
Cannot impugn you as you do proceed.
You stand within his danger, do you not?

*Ant.* Ay, so he says.

*Por.* Do you confess the bonds?

*Ant.* I do.

*Por.* Then must the Jew be merciful.

*Shy.* On what compulsion must I? tell me that.
*Por.* The quality of mercy is not strain'd,
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath; it is twice blest;
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes:
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown;
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
But mercy is above this sceptred sway;
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,
Though justice be thy plea, consider this,
That, in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy;
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy. I have spoken thus much
To mitigate the justice of thy plea;
Which, if thou follow, this strict court of Venice
Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant
there.
*Shy.* My deeds upon my head! I crave the law,
The penalty and forfeit of my bond.
*Por.* Is he not able to discharge the money?
*Bass.* Yes, here I tender it for him in the court;
Yea, twice the sum: if that will not suffice,
I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er,
On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart:
If this will not suffice, it must appear

That malice bears down truth. And I beseech you,
Wrest once the law to your authority:
To do a great right, do a little wrong,
And curb this cruel devil of his will.

*Por.* It must not be; there is no power in Venice
Can alter a decree establishèd:
'Twill be recorded for a precedent,
And many an error by the same example
Will rush into the state; it cannot be.

*Shy.* A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!
O wise young judge, how I do honour thee!

*Por.* I pray you, let me look upon the bond.

*Shy.* Here 'tis, most reverend doctor, here it is.

*Por.* Shylock, there's thrice thy money offer'd thee.

*Shy.* An oath, an oath, I have an oath in heaven:
Shall I lay perjury upon my soul?
No, not for Venice!

*Por.* Why, this bond is forfeit;
And lawfully by this the Jew may claim
A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off
Nearest the merchant's heart. Be merciful:
Take thrice thy money; bid me tear the bond.

*Shy.* When it is paid according to the tenour.
It doth appear you are a worthy judge;
You know the law, your exposition
Hath been most sound: I charge you by the law,
Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar,
Proceed to judgment: by my soul I swear
There is no power in the tongue of man
To alter me: I stay here on my bond.

*Ant.* Most heartily I do beseech the court
To give the judgment.

*Por.* Why, then, thus it is:
You must prepare your bosom for his knife.
*Shy.* O noble Judge! O excellent young man!
*Por.* For the intent and purpose of the law
Hath full relation to the penalty,
Which here appeareth due upon the bond.
*Shy.* 'Tis very true: O wise and upright judge!
How much more elder art thou than thy looks!
*Por.* Therefore lay bare your bosom.
*Shy.* Ay, his breast:
So says the bond; doth it not noble judge?
'Nearest his heart:' those are the very words.
*Por.* It is so. Are there balance here to weigh
The flesh?
*Shy.* I have them ready.
*Por.* Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your charge,
To stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death.
*Shy.* Is it so nominated in the bond?
*Por.* It is not so express'd: but what of that?
'Twere good you do so much for charity.
*Shy.* I cannot find it; 'tis not in the bond.
*Por.* You, merchant, have you anything to say?
*Ant.* But little: I am arm'd and well prepared.
Give me your hand, Bassanio; fare you well!
Grieve not that I am fallen to this for you:
For herein fortune shows herself more kind
Than is her custom: it is still her use
To let the wretched man outlive his wealth,
To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow
An age of poverty; from which lingering penance
Of such misery doth she cut me off.
Commend me to your honourable wife:

Tell her the process of Antonio's end;
Say how I loved you, speak me fair in death;
And, when the tale is told, bid her be judge
Whether Bassanio had not once a love.
Repent not you that you shall lose your friend,
And he repents not that he pays your debt;
For if the Jew do cut but deep enough,
I'll pay it presently with all my heart.

*Bass.* Antonio, I am married to a wife
Which is as dear to me as life itself;
But life itself, my wife, and all the world,
Are not with me esteem'd above thy life:
I would lose all, ay, sacrifice them all
Here to this devil, to deliver you.

*Por.* Your wife would give you little thanks for that,
If she were by, to hear you make the offer.

*Gra.* I have a wife whom, I protest, I love:
I would she were in heaven, so she could
Entreat some power to change this currish Jew.

*Ner.* 'Tis well you offer it behind her back;
The wish would make else an unquiet house.

*Shy.* These be the Christian husbands. I have a daughter;
Would any of the stock of Barrabas
Had been her husband rather than a Christian!
[*Aside.*
We trifle time: I pray thee, pursue sentence.

*Por.* A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine:
The court awards it, and the law doth give it.

*Shy.* Most rightful judge!

*Por.* And you must cut this flesh from off his breast:
The law allows it, and the court awards it.
*Shy.* Most learned judge! A sentence! Come, prepare!
*Por.* Tarry a little; there is something else.
This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood;
The words expressly are 'a pound of flesh':
Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh;
But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed
One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods
Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate
Unto the state of Venice.
*Gra.* O upright judge! Mark, Jew: O learned judge!
*Shy.* Is that the law?
*Por.* Thyself shall see the act:
For, as thou urgest justice, be assured
Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desirest.
*Gra.* O learned judge! Mark, Jew: a learned judge!
*Shy.* I take this offer, then; pay the bond thrice
And let the Christian go.
*Bass.* Here is the money.
*Por.* Soft!
The Jew shall have all justice; soft! no haste:
He shall have nothing but the penalty.
*Gra.* O Jew! an upright judge, a learned judge!
*Por.* Therefore prepare thee to cut off the flesh;
Shed thou no blood, nor cut thou less nor more
But just a pound of flesh: if thou cut'st more
Or less than a just pound, be it but so much
As makes it light or heavy in the substance
Or the division of the twentieth part

Of one poor scruple, nay, if the scale do turn
But in the estimation of a hair,
Thou diest and all thy goods are confiscate.
*Gra.* A second Daniel, a Daniel, Jew!
Now, infidel, I have you on the hip.
*Por.* Why doth the Jew pause? take thy forfeiture.
*Shy.* Give me my principal, and let me go.
*Bass.* I have it ready for thee; here it is.
*Por.* He hath refused it in the open court:
He shall have merely justice and his bond.
*Gra.* A Daniel, still say I, a second Daniel!
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.
*Shy.* Shall I not have barely my principal?
*Por.* Thou shalt have nothing but the forfeiture,
To be so taken at thy peril, Jew.
*Shy.* Why, then the Devil give him good of it!
I'll stay no longer question.
*Por.* Tarry, Jew:
The law hath yet another hold on you.
It is enacted in the laws of Venice,
If it be proved against an alien
That by direct or indirect attempts
He seek the life of any citizen,
The party 'gainst the which he doth contrive
Shall seize one half his goods; the other half
Comes to the privy coffer of the state;
And the offender's life lies in the mercy
Of the Duke only, 'gainst all other voice.
In which predicament, I say, thou stand'st;
For it appears, by manifest proceeding,
That indirectly and directly too

Thou hast contrived against the very life
Of the defendant; and thou hast incurr'd
The danger formally by me rehearsed.
Down therefore and beg mercy of the duke.

*Gra.* Beg that thou mayst have leave to hang thyself:
And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the state,
Thou hast not left the value of a cord;
Therefore thou must be hang'd at the state's charge.

*Duke.* That thou shalt see the difference of our spirits,
I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it:
For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's;
The other half comes to the general state,
Which humbleness may drive unto a fine.

*Por.* Ay, for the state, not for Antonio.

*Shy.* Nay, take my life and all; pardon not that:
You take my house when you do take the prop
That doth sustain my house: you take my life
When you do take the means whereby I live.

*Por.* What mercy can you render him, Antonio?

*Gra.* A halter gratis; nothing else, for God's sake.

*Ant.* So please my lord the duke and all the court
To quit the fine for one half of his goods,
I am content; so he will let me have
The other half in use, to render it,
Upon his death, unto the gentleman
That lately stole his daughter:
Two things provided more, that for this favour,
He presently become a Christian;
The other, that he do record a gift,

Here in this court, of all he dies possess'd,
Unto his son Lorenzo and his daughter.

*Duke.* He shall do this, or else I do recant
The pardon that I late pronouncèd here.

*Por.* Art thou contented, Jew? what dost thou say?

*Shy.* I am content.

*Por.* Clerk, draw a deed of gift.

*Shy.* I pray you, give me leave to go from hence;
I am not well: send the deed after me,
And I will sign it.

*Duke.* Get thee gone, but do it.

*Gra.* In christening shalt thou have two godfathers:
Had I been judge, thou shouldst have had ten more,
To bring thee to the gallows, not the font.

[*Exit* Shylock.

Now after the trial Antonio and Bassanio are profuse of their gratitude to the young doctor, but she declines to take any pay, except as a remembrance Antonio's gloves, and, if he will, the ring Bassanio wears upon his finger, which Portia gave him, making him swear never to part with it. Nerissa also asks for Gratiano's ring. At first they are refused, but it seems so ungrateful that the rings are sent after.

Scene 2 shows us the delivery of the rings by Gratiano.

## *ACT V*

The final act is one of beautiful sentences and gay jesting. The single scene is laid at Belmont. Lorenzo and Jessica walk in an avenue approaching Portia's house.

*Lor.* The moon shines bright: in such a night as this,
When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees
And they did make no noise, in such a night
Troilus methinks mounted the Trojan walls
And sigh'd his soul toward the Grecian tents,
Where Cressid lay that night.

*Jes.* In such a night
Did Thisbe fearfully o'ertrip the dew
And saw the lion's shadow ere himself
And ran dismay'd away.

*Lor.* In such a night
Stood Dido with a willow in her hand
Upon the wild sea banks and waft her love
To come again to Carthage.

*Jes.* In such a night
Medea gather'd the enchanted herbs
That did renew old Æsop.

*Lor.* In such a night
Did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew
And with an unthrift love did run from Venice
As far as Belmont.

But they are interrupted by a messenger announcing Portia. While they wait Lorenzo muses,—

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!
Here will we sit and let the sounds of music
Creep in our ears: soft stillness and the night
Become the touches of sweet harmony.
Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold:

There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins;
Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

*Enter* Portia *and* Nerissa.

*Por.* That light we see is burning in my hall
How far that little candle throws his beams!
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.

*Ner.* When the moon shone, we did not see the candle.

*Por.* So doth the greater glory dim the less:
A substitute shines brightly as a king,
Until a king be by; and then his state
Empties itself, as doth an inland brook
Into the main of waters. Music! hark!

*Ner.* It is your music, madam, of the house.

*Por.* Nothing is good, I see, without respect:
Methinks it sounds much sweeter than by day.

*Ner.* Silence bestows that virtue on it, madam.

*Por.* The crow doth sing as sweetly as the lark,
When neither is attended; and I think
The nightingale, if she should sing by day,
When every goose is cackling, would be thought
No better a musician than the wren.
How many things by season season'd are
To their right praise and true perfection!
Peace ho! the moon sleeps with Endymion,
And would not be awaked. [*Music ceases.*

Presently Bassanio and Gratiano arrive, and the women begin to question them about the rings. They swear the rings were given to women, while the men maintain they gave them to the learned doctor and his clerk. At last they find out who the doctor and his clerk have been, and the plays ends with Gratiano's exclamation,

> Well, while I live, I'll fear no other thing
> So sore as keeping safe Nerissa's ring.

# ROMEO AND JULIET

## *INTRODUCTION*

Romeo and Juliet is probably the most popular, and likewise the greatest, romantic love tragedy ever produced on the stage. Shakspere wrote it at almost the same time that he produced the Merchant of Venice, or at least he rewrote it then, and its popularity caused it to be pirated and printed. Some think that the play as first written was among the earliest efforts of Shakspere.

The story originated in Italy as a tale or novel, and had long been popular there when it was translated into English. Shakspere seems to have used for the most part a poetic version by Arthur Brooke, which was published in 1562. He made a few changes for dramatic effect, however. The time of the action in the poem is four or five months; in the play it is made as many days. The character of Mercutio was almost entirely developed by Shakspere, and he made Paris die by the hand of Romeo at the tomb, while in the poem Paris is not again heard of.

Brooke's poem is a commonplace narrative, while Shakspere's play is a transcendent love lyric. Like a literary alchemist, he borrowed base metal only that he might turn it to gold.

The characters of Romeo and Juliet have been star

roles of most of the great Shaksperean actors and actresses.

The scene is Verona, except once, when Romeo in banishment appears in Mantua. Time, fourteenth century. The lovers meet on Sunday, marry on Monday, part at dawn on Tuesday, and are united in death on Thursday.

## *DRAMATIS PERSONÆ*

ESCALUS, *prince of Verona*
PARIS, *a young nobleman, kinsman to the prince*
MONTAGUE, CAPULET } *heads of two houses at variance with each other*
An old man, of the Capulet family
ROMEO, *son to Montague*
MERCUTIO, *kinsman to the prince, and friend to Romeo*
BENVOLIO, *a nephew to Montague, and friend to Romeo*
TYBALT, *nephew to Lady Capulet*
FRIAR LAURENCE, *a Franciscan*
FRIAR JOHN, *of the same order*
BALTHASAR, *servant to Romeo*
SAMPSON, GREGORY } *servants to Capulet*
PETER, *servant to Juliet's nurse*
ABRAHAM, *servant to Montague*
An Apothecary
Three Musicians
Page to Paris; another Page; an Officer
LADY MONTAGUE, *wife to Montague*
LADY CAPULET, *wife to Capulet*

JULIET, *daughter to Capulet*
Nurse to Juliet
Citizens of Verona; kinsfolk of both houses; Maskers, Guards, Watchmen, and Attendants
Chorus

SCENE: *Verona; Mantua.*

## *ACT I*

SCENE 1. Two noble families, the Capulets and the Montagues, have had a long standing feud, and the servants of the two houses fight whenever they meet.

*A Public Street.* Enter Sampson and Gregory of the house of Capulet, and presently come in Abraham and Balthasar of the house of Montague. As the latter enter, Sampson bites his thumb at them to annoy them.

*Abr.* Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

*Sam.* I do bite my thumb, sir.

*Abr.* Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

*Sam.* [*Aside to Gre.*] Is the law of our side, if I say ay?

*Gre.* No.

*Sam.* No, sir, I do not bite my thumb at you, sir; but I bite my thumb, sir.

*Gre.* Do you quarrel, sir?

*Abr.* Quarrel, sir! no, sir.

*Sam.* But if you do, sir, I am for you: I serve as good a man as you.

*Abr.* No better.

*Sam.* Well, sir.

*Enter* Benvolio.

*Gre.* [*Aside to Sam.*] Say 'better': here comes one of my master's kinsmen.

*Sam.* Yes, better, sir.

*Abr.* You lie.

*Sam.* Draw, if you be men. Gregory, remember thy swashing blow. [*They fight.*

Benvolio parts the servants, but just then along comes Tybalt, of the house of Capulet, and he and Benvolio fall to fighting. Citizens and peace officers rush in, old Capulet and Lady Capulet appear, and then Montague and Lady Montague, all hot for a fight. But the Prince of Verona gives them a long lecture and binds them to keep the peace.

The Montagues remain behind and talk of Romeo, who has been moping of late. Romeo is seen approaching, and Benvolio is told to find out what the trouble is.

He is in love—with Rosaline. In a spurious language of conceited love he tells Benvolio about her.

*Rom.* She is too fair, too wise, wisely too fair,
To merit bliss by making me despair:
She hath forsworn to love; and in that vow
Do I live dead, that live to tell it now.

*Ben.* Be ruled by me, forget to think of her.

*Rom.* O, teach me how I should forget to think.

*Ben.* By giving liberty unto thine eyes;
Examine other beauties.

*Rom.* 'Tis the way
To call hers, exquisite, in question more:
These happy masks that kiss fair ladie's brows,
Being black, put us in mind they hide the fair

He that is strucken blind cannot forget
The precious treasure of his eyesight lost:
Show me a mistress that is passing fair,
What doth her beauty serve but as a note
Where I may read who pass'd that passing fair?
Farewell: thou canst not teach me to forget.

*Ben.* I'll pay that doctrine, or else die in debt.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE 2. Old Capulet and Count Paris appear on a street. Paris would like to marry Capulet's daughter Juliet, but the father says she is not fourteen. He is giving a masking party that evening, and invites Paris among the rest. There he may, if he will, make love to Juliet. A servant is sent to invite the guests.

Soon after the exit of Capulet and Paris, enter Romeo and Benvolio, still talking of love. The servant, who cannot read, asks them to help him make out his list. So they find out that there is to be a party at Capulet's. Here is Benvolio's chance.

*Ben.* At this same ancient feast of Capulet's
Sups the fair Rosaline whom thou so lovest
With all the admired beauties of Verona:
Go thither, and with unattainted eye
Compare her face with some that I shall show,
And I will make thee think thy swan a crow.

*Rom.* When the devout religion of mine eye
Maintains such falsehood, then turn tears to fires;
And these, who, often drown'd, could never die,
Transparent heretics, be burnt for liars!
One fairer than my love! the all-seeing sun
Ne'er saw her match since first the world begun.

*Ben.* Tut, you saw her fair, none else being by,
Herself poised with herself in either eye:
But in that crystal scales let there be weigh'd
Your lady's love against some other maid
That I will show you shining at this feast,
And she shall scant show well that now seems best.

*Rom.* I'll go along, no such sight to be shown,
But to rejoice in splendour of mine own.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene 3. *A Room in Capulet's House.* Lady Capulet and Juliet's nurse call in Juliet herself to talk about her marrying. The nurse rambles on till both Lady Capulet and Juliet have asked her to stop.

*Nurse.* Peace, I have done. God mark thee to his grace!
Thou wast the prettiest babe that e'er I nursed:
And I might live to see thee married once,
I have my wish.

*La. Cap.* Marry, that 'marry' is the very theme
I came to talk of. Tell me, daughter Juliet,
How stands your disposition to be married?

*Jul.* It is an honour that I dream not of.

*La. Cap.* Well, think of marriage now; younger than you
Here in Verona, ladies of esteem,
Are made already mothers. By my count,
I was your mother much upon these years
That you are now a maid. Thus then in brief;
The valiant Paris seeks you for his love.

*Nurse.* A man, young lady! lady, such a man
As all the world—why, he's a man of wax.

*La Cap.* Verona's summer hath not such a flower.
*Nurse.* Nay, he's a flower; in faith, a very flower.
*La. Cap.* What say you? can you love the gentleman?
This night you shall behold him at our feast:
Read o'er the volume of young Paris' face,
And find delight writ there with beauty's pen;
Examine every married lineament,
And see how one another lends content;
And what obscured in this fair volume lies
Find written in the margent of his eyes.
So shall you share all that he doth possess,
By having him making yourself no less.
*Nurse.* No less! nay, bigger: women grow by men.
*La. Cap.* Speak briefly, can you like of Paris' love?
*Jul.* I'll look to like, if looking liking move:
But no more deep will I endart mine eye
Than your consent gives strength to make it fly.

*Enter a Servingman.*

*Serv.* Madam, the guests are come, supper served up, you called, my young lady asked for, the nurse cursed in the pantry, and everything in extremity. I must hence to wait; I beseech you, follow straight.
*La. Cap.* We follow thee. [*Exit Servingman.*]
Juliet, the county stays.
*Nurse.* Go, girl, seek happy nights to happy days.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE 4. Romeo, Benvolio, their witty friend Mercutio, and others appear on their way to the masque. At these affairs strangers enter as guests, with all the privileges of hospitality.

*Rom.* A torch for me: let wantons light of heart
Tickle the senseless rushes with their heels;
For I am proverb'd with a grandsire phrase;
I'll be a candle-holder, and look on.
The game was ne'er so fair, and I am done.
*Mer.* Tut, dun's the mouse, the constable's own word:
If thou are dun, we'll draw thee from the mire
Of this sir-reverence love, wherein thou stick'st
Up to the ears. Come, we burn daylight, ho.
*Rom.* Nay, that's not so.
*Mer.* I mean, sir, in delay
We waste our lights in vain, like lamps by day.
Take our good meaning, for our judgment sits
Five times in that ere once in our five wits.
*Rom.* And we mean well, in going to this mask;
But 'tis no wit to go.
*Mer.* Why, may one ask?
*Rom.* I dreamt a dream to-night.
*Mer.* And so did I.
*Rom.* Well, what was yours?
*Mer.* That dreamers often lie.
*Rom.* In bed asleep, while they do dream things true.
*Mer.* O, then, I see Queen Mab hath been with you.
She is the fairies' midwife, and she comes
In shape no bigger than an agate-stone
On the fore-finger of an alderman,
Drawn with a team of little atomies
Athwart men's noses as they lie asleep:
And in this state she gallops night by night
Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love;

O'er courtiers' knees, that dream on court'sies straight;
O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dream on fees;
O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream,
Which oft the angry Mab with blisters plagues,
Because their breaths with sweetmeats tainted are:
Somtimes she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,
And then dreams he of smelling out a suit;
And sometime comes she with a tithe-pig's tail
Tickling a parson's nose as a'lies asleep,
Then dreams he of another benefice:
Sometimes she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,
And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,
Of breaches, ambuscadoes, Spanish blades,
Of healths five fathoms deep; and then anon
Drums in his ear, at which he starts and wakes,
And being thus frighted swears a prayer or two,
And sleeps again.

*Rom.* Peace, peace, Mercutio, peace.
Thou talk'st of nothing.

*Mer.* True, I talk of dreams;
Which are the children of an idle brain,
Begot of nothing but vain fantasy,
Which is as thin of substance as the air,
And more inconstant than the wind, who wooes
Even now the frozen bosom of the north,
And, being anger'd, puffs away from thence,
Turning his face to the dew-dropping south.

*Ben.* This wind you talk of blows us from ourselves;
Supper is done, and we shall come too late.

*Rom.* I fear, too early: for my mind misgives
Some consequence, yet hanging in the stars,
Shall bitterly begin his fearful date
With this night's revels, and expire the term
Of a despised life closed in my breast,
By some vile forfeit of untimely death:
But He, that hath the steerage of my course,
Direct my sail! On, lusty gentlemen.

*Ben.* Strike, drum. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE 5. *A Hall in Capulet's House.* Capulet and maskers enter. Romeo, too, is there, and catches sight of Juliet.

*Rom.* [*To a Servingman*] What lady's that, which doth enrich the hand
Of yonder knight?

*Serv.* I know not, sir.

*Rom.* O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!
It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night
Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear;
Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear!
So shows a snowy dove trooping with crows,
As yonder lady o'er her fellows shows.
The measure done, I'll watch her place of stand,
And, touching hers, make blessed my rude hand.
Did my heart love till now? forswear it, sight!
For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night.

Tybalt recognizes Romeo's voice and would like to run him through the body with his rapier, but Capulet restrains his passion. In the meantime Romeo has reached the side of Juliet.

*Rom.* [*To Juliet*] If I profane with my unworthiest hand
This holy shrine, the gentle fine in this,
My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand
To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.

*Jul.* Good pilgrim, you do wrong your hand too much,
Which mannerly devotion shows in this;
For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch,
And palm to palm is holy palmers' kiss.

*Rom.* Have not saints lips, and holy palmers too?

*Jul.* Ay, pilgrim, lips that they must use in prayer.

*Rom.* O, then, dear saint, let lips do what hands do;
They pray, grant thou, lest faith turn to despair.

*Jul.* Saints do not move, though grant for prayer's sake.

*Rom.* Then move not, while my prayer's effect I take.
Thus from my lips by thine my sin is purged.
[*Kissing her.*

*Jul.* Then have my lips the sin that they have took.

*Rom.* Sin from my lips? O trespass sweetly urged!
Give me my sin again.

*Jul.* You kiss by the book.

*Nurse.* Madam, your mother craves a word with you.

*Rom.* What is her mother?

*Nurse.* Marry, bachelor,
Her mother is the lady of the house,
And a good lady, and a wise and virtuous:

I nursed her daughter, that you talk'd withal;
I tell you, he that can lay hold of her
Shall have the chinks.

*Rom.* Is she a Capulet?
O dear account! my life is my foe's debt.

*Ben.* Away, be gone; the sport is at the best.

*Rom.* Ay, so I fear; the more is my unrest.

*Cap.* Nay, gentlemen, prepare not to be gone;
We have a trifling foolish banquet towards.
Is it e'en so? why then, I thank you all;
I thank you, honest gentlemen; good night.
More torches here! Come on, then, let's to bed.
Ah, sirrah, by my fay, it waxes late:
I'll to my rest. *Exeunt all but Juliet and Nurse.*

*Jul.* Come hither, nurse. What is yond gentleman?
*Nurse.* The son and heir of old Tiberio.
*Jul.* What's he that now is going out of door?
*Nurse.* Marry, that, I think, be young Petruchio.
*Jul.* What's he that follows there, that would not dance?
*Nurse.* I know not.
*Jul.* Go ask his name. If he be married,
My grave is like to be my wedding bed.
*Nurse.* His name is Romeo, and a Montague,
The only son of your great enemy.

*Jul.* My only love sprung from my only hate!
Too early seen unknown, and known too late!
Prodigious birth of love it is to me,
That I must love a loathèd enemy.

*Nurse.* What's this? what's this?

*Jul.* A rhyme I learn'd even now
Of one I danced withal. [*One calls within 'Juliet.'*

*Nurse.* Anon, anon!
Come, let's away; the strangers all are gone.
[*Exeunt.*

## *ACT II*

SCENE 1. *Outside Capulet's Garden.* Romeo is preparing to climb in, and Benvolio and Mercutio are looking for him.

SCENE 2. The famous balcony scene in Capulet's garden, at night.

*Capulet's Orchard. Enter* Romeo.

*Rom.* He jests at scars that never felt a wound.
[*Juliet appears above at a window.*
But, soft! what light through yonder window break?
It is the east, and Juliet is the sun!
Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,
Who is already sick and pale with grief,
That thou her maid art far more fair than she:
Be not her maid, since she is envious;
Her vestal livery is but sick and green,
And none but fools do wear it; cast it off.
It is my lady; O, it is my love!
O, that she knew she were!
She speaks, yet she says nothing: what of that?
Her eye discourses, I will answer it.
I am too bold, 'tis not to me she speaks:
Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,
Having some business, do intreat her eyes
To twinkle in their spheres till they return.

What if her eyes were there, they in her head?
The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars,
As daylight doth a lamp; her eyes in heaven
Would through the airy region stream so bright
That birds would sing and think it were not night.
See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand,
O, that I were a glove upon that hand,
That I might touch that cheek!

*Jul.* Ah me!

*Rom.* She speaks:
O speak again, bright angel! for thou art
As glorious to this night, being o'er my head,
As is a winged messenger of heaven
Unto the white-upturnèd wondering eyes
Of mortals that fall to gaze on him,
When he bestrides the lazy-pacing clouds
And sails upon the bosom of the air.

*Jul.* O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?
Deny thy father and refuse thy name;
Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,
And I'll no longer be a Capulet.

*Rom.* [*Aside*] Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?

*Jul.* 'Tis but thy name that is my enemy;
Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.
What's Montague? it is nor hand, nor foot,
Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part
Belonging to a man. O, be some other name!
What's in a name? that which we call a rose

By any other name would smell as sweet;
So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call'd,
Retain that dear perfection which he owes
Without that title. Romeo, doff thy name,
And for thy name, which is no part of thee,
Take all myself.

*Rom.* I take thee at thy word:
Call me but love, and I'll be new baptized;
Henceforth I never will be Romeo.

*Jul.* What man art thou, that, thus bescreen'd in night,
So stumblest on my counsel?

*Rom.* By a name
I know not how to tell thee who I am:
My name, dear saint, is hateful to myself,
Because it is an enemy to thee;
Had I it written, I would tear the word.

*Jul.* My ears have not yet drunk a hundred words
Of thy tongue's uttering, yet I know the sound:
Art thou not Romeo, and a Montague?

*Rom.* Neither, fair maid, if either thee dislike.

*Jul.* How camest thou hither, tell me, and wherefore?
The orchard walls are high and hard to climb,
And the place death, considering who thou art,
If any of my kinsmen find thee here.

*Rom.* With love's light wings did I o'er-perch these walls.
For stony limits cannot hold love out:
And what love can do, that dares love attempt;
Therefore thy kinsmen are no let to me.

*Jul.* If they do see thee, they will murder thee.

*Rom.* Alack, there lies more peril in thine eye
Than twenty of their swords: look thou but sweet,
And I am proof against their enmity.

*Jul.* I would not for the world they saw thee here.

*Rom.* I have night's cloak to hide me from their eyes;
And but thou love me, let them find me here:
My life were better ended by their hate,
Than death prorogued, wanting of thy love.

*Jul.* By whose direction found'st thou out this place?

*Rom.* By love, that first did prompt me to inquire;
He lent me counsel, and I lent him eyes.
I am no pilot; yet, wert thou as far
As that vast shore wash'd with the farthest sea,
I would adventure for such merchandise.

*Jul.* Thou know'st the mask of night is on my face,
Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek
For that which thou hast heard me speak tonight.
Fain would I dwell on form, fain, fain deny
What I have spoke: but farewell compliment!
Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say 'Ay,'
And I will take thy word: yet, if thou swear'st,
Thou may's prove false: at lovers' perjuries,
They say, Jove laughs. O gentle Romeo,
If thou didst love, pronounce it faithfully:
Of if thou think'st I am too quickly won,
I'll frown and be perverse and say thee nay,
So thou wilt woo; but else, not for the world.
In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond;
And therefore thou may'st think my 'haviour light:
Where on a sudden one hath wounded me,

But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true
Than those that have more cunning to be strange.
I should have been more strange, I must confess,
But that thou overheard'st, ere I was ware,
My true love's passion: therefore pardon me,
And not impute this yielding to light love,
Which the dark night hath so discovered.

*Rom.* Lady, by yonder blessèd moon I swear,
That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops,—

*Jul.* O, swear not by the moon, th' inconstant moon,
That monthly changes in her circled orb,
Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.

*Rom.* What shall I swear by?

*Jul.* Do not swear at all;
Or, if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,
Which is the god of my idolatry,
And I'll believe thee.

*Rom.* And if my heart's dear love—

*Jul.* Well, do not swear: although I joy in thee.
I have no joy of this contract to-night:
It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden,
Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be
Ere one can say 'it lightens.' Sweet, good night!
This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,
May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet.
Good night, good night! as sweet repose and rest
Come to thy heart as that within my breast!

*Rom.* O, wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?

*Jul.* What satisfaction can'st thou have to-night?

*Rom.* The exchange of thy love's faithful vow for mine.

*Jul.* I gave thee mine before thou didst request it:
And yet I would it were to give again.
*Rom.* Would'st thou withdraw it? For what purpose, love?
*Jul.* But to be frank, and give it thee again.
And yet I wish but for the thing I have:
My bounty is as boundless as the sea,
My love as deep; the more I give to thee,
The more I have, for both are infinite.
I hear some noise within; dear love, adieu!
[*Nurse calls within.*
Anon, good nurse! Sweet Montague, be true.
Stay but a little, I will come again. [*Exit*
*Rom.* O blessèd, blessèd night! I am afeard,
Being in night, all this is but a dream,
Too flattering-sweet to be substantial.
*Re-enter* Juliet, *above.*
*Jul.* Three words, dear Romeo, and good night indeed.
If that thy bent of love be honourable,
Thy purpose marriage, send me word to-morrow,
By one that I'll procure to come to thee,
Where and what time thou wilt perform the rite,
And all my fortunes at thy foot I'll lay,
And follow thee my lord throughout the world.
*Nurse.* [*Within*] Madam!
*Jul.* I come, anon.—But if thou mean'st not well, I do beseech thee—
*Nurse.* [*Within*] Madam!
*Jul.* By and by, I come:—
To cease thy suit, and leave me to my grief:
To-morrow will I send.

*Rom.* So thrive my soul,—
*Jul.* A thousand times good night! [*Exit.*
*Rom.* A thousand times the worse, to want thy light.
Love goes toward love, as schoolboys from their books,
But love from love, toward school with heavy looks.
[*Retiring slowly.*

*Re-enter* Juliet, *above.*

*Jul.* Hist! Romeo, hist!—O, for a falconer's voice,
To lure this tassel-gentle back again!
Bondage is hoarse, and may not speak aloud;
Else would I tear the cave where Echo lies,
And make her airy tongue more hoarse than mine.
With repetition of my Romeo's name.
Romeo!

*Rom.* It is my soul that calls upon my name:
How silver-sweet sound lover's tongues by night,
Like softest music to attending ears!

*Jul.* Romeo!

*Rom.* My dear?

*Jul.* At what o'clock to-morrow
Shall I send to thee?

*Rom.* At the hour of nine.

*Jul.* I will not fail: 'tis twenty years till then.
I have forgot why I did call thee back.

*Rom.* Let me stand here till thou remember it.

*Jul.* I shall forget, to have thee still stand there,
Remembering how I love thy company.

*Rom.* And I'll still stay, to have thee still forget,
Forgetting any other home but this.

*Jul.* 'Tis almost morning; I would have thee gone:
And yet no farther than a wanton's bird,
Who lets it hop a little from her hand,
Like a poor prisoner in his twisted gyves,
And with a silk thread plucks it back again,
So loving-jealous of his liberty.

*Rom.* I would I were thy bird.

*Jul.* Sweet, so would I:
Yet I should kill thee with much cherishing.
Good night, good night, parting is such sweet sorrow
That I shall say good night till it be morrow.
[*Exit.*

*Rom.* Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace in thy breast!
Would I were sleep and peace, so sweet to rest!
Hence will I to my ghostly father's cell,
His help to crave, and my dear hap to tell.
[*Exit.*

Scene 3. *Friar Laurence's cell.* It is early morning. Presently Romeo appears. He has not been in bed, and Friar Laurence asks if he has been with Rosaline.

*Rom.* With Rosaline, my ghostly father? no;
I have forgot that name and that name's woe.

*Fri. L.* That's my good son: but where hast thou been then?

*Rom.* I'll tell thee ere thou ask it me again.
I have been feasting with mine enemy;

That's by me wounded: both our remedies
Within thy help and holy physic lies:
I bear no hatred, blessed man, for, lo,
My intercession likewise steads my foe.

*Fri. L.* Be plain, good son, and homely in thy drift;
Riddling confession finds but riddling shrift.

*Rom.* Then plainly know my heart's dear love is set
On the fair daughter of rich Capulet:
As mine on her, so hers is set on mine;
And all combined, save what thou must combine
By holy marriage: when, and where, and how,
We met, we woo'd and made exchange of vow,
I'll tell thee as we pass; but this I pray,
That thou consent to marry us to-day.

*Fri. L.* Holy St. Francis, what a change is here!
Is Rosaline, that thou didst love so dear,
So soon forsaken? young men's love then lies
Not truly in their hearts, but in their eyes.
Jesu Maria, what a deal of brine
Hath washed thy sallow cheeks for Rosaline!
How much salt water thrown away in waste,
To season love, that of it doth not taste!
The sun not yet thy sighs from heaven clears,
Thy old groans ring yet in mine ancient ears;
Lo, here upon thy cheek the stain doth sit
Of an old tear that is not wash'd off yet:
If e'er thou wast thyself and these woes thine,
Thou and these woes were all for Rosaline:
And art thou changed? pronounce this sentence then:
Women may fall when there's no strength in men.

*Rom.* Thou chid'st me oft for loving Rosaline.

*Fri. L.* For doting, not for loving, pupil mine.

*Rom.* And bad'st me bury love.

*Fri. L.* Not in a grave,
To lay one in, another out to have.

*Rom.* I pray thee, chide not: she whom I love now
Doth grace for grace and love for love allow;
The other did not so.

*Fri. L.* O, she knew well
Thy love did read by rote and could not spell.
But come, young waverer, come, go with me,
In one respect I'll thy assistant be;
For this alliance may so happy prove,
To turn your households' rancour to pure love.

*Rom.* O, let us hence; I stand on sudden haste.

*Fri. L.* Wisely and slow: they stumble that run fast.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE 4. *A street.* Benvolio and Mercutio are looking for Romeo. Tybalt has sent Romeo a challenge, they say, which of course Romeo will accept.

*Mer.* Alas, poor Romeo, he is already dead! stabbed with a white wench's black eye; shot through the ear with a love-song; the very pin of his heart cleft with the blind bow-boy's butt-shaft: and is he a man to encounter Tybalt?

*Ben.* Why, what is Tybalt?

*Mer.* More than prince of cats, I can tell you.

Romeo *enters.*

And so they go on jesting till presently the nurse enters with Peter.

*Enter* Nurse *and* Peter.

*Mer.* A sail, a sail!

*Ben.* Two, two; a shirt and a smock.

*Nurse.* Peter!

*Peter.* Anon?

*Nurse.* My fan, Peter.

*Mer.* Good Peter, to hide her face, for her fan's the fairer of the two.

*Nurse.* God ye good morrow, gentlemen.

*Mer.* God ye good den, fair gentlewoman.

*Nurse.* Is it good den?

*Mer.* 'Tis no less, I tell you; for the bawdy hand of the dial is now upon the prick of noon.

*Nurse.* Out upon you! what a man are you!

*Rom.* One, gentlewoman, that God hath made himself to mar.

*Nurse.* By my troth, it is well said; 'for himself to mar,' quoth a'? Gentlemen, can any of you tell me where I may find the young Romeo?

*Rom.* I can tell you; but young Romeo will be older when you have found him than he was when you sought him: I am the youngest of that name, for fault of a worse.

*Nurse.* You say well.

*Mer.* Yea, is the worst well? very well took, i' faith; wisely, wisely.

*Nurse.* If you be he, sir, I desire some confidence with you.

*Ben.* She will indite him to some supper.

*Mer.* A bawd, a bawd, a bawd! So ho!

*Rom.* What hast thou found?

*Mer.* No hare, sir; unless a hare, sir, in a lenten pie, that is something stale and hoar ere it be spent. [*Sings.*

An old hare hoar,
And an old hare hoar,
Is very good meat in lent:
But a hare that is hoar,
Is too much for a score,
When it hoars ere it be spent.

Romeo, will you come to your father's? we'll to dinner thither.

*Rom.* I will follow you.

*Mer.* Farewell, ancient lady; farewell, [*Singing*] 'lady, lady, lady.'

[*Exeunt Mercutio and Benvolio.*

*Nurse.* Marry, farewell! I pray you, sir, what saucy merchant was this, that was so full of his ropery?

*Rom.* A gentleman, nurse, that loves to hear himself talk, and will speak more in a minute than he will stand to in a month.

After a great deal of talking on the part of the Nurse, Romeo tells her if Juliet will come to Friar Laurence's cell that afternoon they will be married. He also arranges for a rope ladder, by which that night he will secretly climb into Juliet's chamber.

SCENE 5. Juliet has been patiently waiting in Capulet's garden for the return of the nurse.

*Enter* Nurse, *with* Peter.

*Jul.* Now, good sweet nurse,—O Lord, why look'st thou sad?
Though news be sad, yet tell them merrily;
If good, thou shamest the music of sweet news
By playing it to me with so sour a face.

*Nurse.* I am a-weary; give me leave awhile.
Fie, how my bones ache! what a jaunce have I had!

*Jul.* I would thou hadst my bones and I thy news:
Nay, come, I pray thee, speak; good, good nurse, speak.

*Nurse.* Jesu, what haste? can you not stay a while?
Do you not see that I am out of breath?

Fifteen minutes later the nurse comes to the point.

*Nurse.* Have you got leave to go to shrift to-day?

*Jul.* I have.

*Nurse.* Then hie you hence to Friar Laurence's cell;
There stays a husband to make you a wife:
Now comes the wanton blood up in your cheeks,
They'll be in scarlet straight at any news.
Hie you to church; I must another way,
To fetch a ladder, by the which your love
Must climb a bird's nest soon when it is dark;
I am the drudge, and toil in your delight;
But you shall bear the burthen soon at night.
Go; I'll to dinner; hie you to the cell.

*Jul.* Hie to high fortune! Honest nurse, farewell.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene 6. Friar Laurence's cell. The Friar and Romeo are waiting for Juliet, and the Friar remarks:

These violent delights have violent ends,
And in their triumph die, like fire and powder,
Which, as they kiss, consume.

Juliet appears, and she expresses her love as just as violent. The Friar hurries them away to be married.

## *ACT III*

Scene 1. *A street. Enter* Mercutio, Benvolio, *and others.* They talk of the quarrel between the two houses, which is in the air. Presently enters Tybalt hot for a fight. Romeo soon appears, and Tybalt flies at him. But Romeo refuses to fight. Mercutio, angered at this, draws his own sword, exclaiming:

*Mer.* O calm, dishonourable, vile submission!
'Alla stoccata' carries it away.
Tybalt, you rat-catcher, will you walk?

*Tyb.* What wouldst thou have with me?

*Mer.* Good king of cats, nothing but one of your nine lives, that I mean to make bold withal, and, as you shall use me hereafter, dry-beat the rest of the eight. Will you pluck your sword out of his pilcher by the ears? make haste, lest mine be about your ears ere it be out.

*Tyb.* I am for you. [*Drawing.*

*Rom.* Gentle Mercutio, put thy rapier up.

*Mer.* Come, sir, your passado. [*They fight.*

*Rom.* Draw, Benvolio; beat down their weapons.
Gentlemen, for shame, forbear this outrage!
Tybalt, Mercutio, the prince expressly hath

Forbid this bandying in Verona streets:
Hold, Tybalt! good Mercutio!

[*Tybalt under Romeo's arm stabs Mercutio and flies with his followers.*

*Mer.* I am hurt;
A plague o' both your houses! I am sped:
Is she gone, and hath nothing?

*Ben.* What, art thou hurt?

*Mer.* Ay, ay, a scratch, a scratch; marry, 'tis enough. Where is my page? Go, villain, fetch a surgeon.

[*Exit* Page.

*Rom.* Courage, man; the hurt cannot be much.

*Mer.* No, 'tis not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church-door; but 'tis enough, 'twill serve: ask for me to-morrow, and you shall find me a grave man. I am peppered, I warrant, for this world. A plague o' both your houses. 'Zounds, a dog, a rat, a mouse, a cat, to scratch a man to death! a braggart, a rogue, a villain, that fights by the book of arithmetic! Why, the devil came you between us? I was hurt under your arm.

*Rom.* I thought all for the best.

*Mer.* Help me into some house, Benvolio,
Or I shall faint. A plague o' both your houses!
They have made worms' meat of me: I have it,
And soundly too: your houses!

[*Exeunt Mercutio and Benvolio.*

*Rom.* This gentleman, the prince's near ally,
My very friend, hath got this mortal hurt
In my behalf; my reputation stain'd

With Tybalt's slander,—Tybalt, that an hour
Hath been my kinsman: O sweet Juliet,
Thy beauty hath made me effeminate,
And in my temper soften'd valour's steel!

*Re-enter* Benvolio.

*Ben.* O Romeo, Romeo, brave Mercutio's dead!
That valiant spirit hath aspired the clouds,
Which too untimely here did scorn the earth.

*Rom.* This day's black fate on more days doth depend;
This but begins the woe others must end.

*Re-enter* Tybalt.

*Ben.* Here comes the furious Tybalt back again.

*Rom.* Alive, in triumph! And Mercutio slain!
Away to heaven, respective lenity,
And fire-eyed fury be my conduct now!
Now, Tybalt, take the 'villain' back again
That late thou gavest me; for Mercutio's soul
Is but a little way above our heads,
Staying for thine to keep him company:
Either thou, or I, or both, must go with him.

*Tyb.* Thou, wretched boy, that didst consort him here,
Shalt with him hence.

*Rom.* This shall determine that.

[*They fight; Tybalt falls.*

*Ben.* Romeo, away, be gone!
The citizens are up, and Tybalt slain:
Stand not amazed: the prince will doom thee death
If thou art taken: hence, be gone, away!

*Rom.* O, I am fortune's fool!

*Ben.* Why dost thou stay?

[*Exit Romeo.*

The Prince appears and decrees Romeo's banishment.

Scene 2. *A room in Capulet's house.* Juliet is talking to herself passionately about love and Romeo, when the Nurse comes in with the rope ladder, and brings the news that Tybalt, Juliet's cousin, has been killed by Romeo and Romeo is banished.

When Juliet learns that Romeo has killed her cousin, she fires out at him. But as soon as the Nurse takes up the same strain, saying "Shame come to Romeo," Juliet cries: "Blister'd be thy tongue for such a wish! . . . O, what a beast I was to chide at him."

And so she goes on, till her only thought is to find and comfort Romeo. She sends the Nurse with a ring for him, bidding him come and say farewell before he goes.

Scene 3. Friar Laurence in his cell tells Romeo of his banishment.

*Rom.* Ha, banishment; be merciful, say 'death';
For exile hath more terror in his look,
Much more than death: do not say 'banishment.'

The Nurse appears, but Romeo continues to rave, and draws his sword to kill himself, but the Friar comforts him with good counsel, and Romeo tells the Nurse he will presently go to Juliet. The Friar promises to keep him informed in Mantua of everything.

Scene 4. Capulet, Lady Capulet, and Paris meet at

Capulet's house to talk of the marriage with Juliet. The death of Tybalt has upset their plans, but the marriage is arranged for Thursday, this being Monday.

SCENE 5. *Juliet's chamber.*

*Enter* Romeo *and* Juliet.

*Jul.* Wilt thou be gone? it is not yet near day:
It was the nightingale, and not the lark,
That pierced the fearful hollow of thine ear;
Nightly she sings on yond pomegranate-tree:
Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.

*Rom.* It was the lark; the herald of the morn,
No nightingale: look, love, what envious streaks
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east:
Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops:
I must be gone and live, or stay and die.

*Jul.* Yond light is not day-light, I know it, I:
It is some meteor that the sun exhales,
To be to thee this night a torch-bearer,
And light thee on thy way to Mantua:
Therefore stay yet; thou need'st not to be gone.

*Rom.* Let me be ta'en, let me be put to death;
I am content, so thou wilt have it so.
I'll say yon grey is not the morning's eye,
'Tis but the pale reflex of Cynthia's brow;
Nor that is not the lark, whose notes do beat
The vaulty heaven so high above our heads:
I have more care to stay than will to go:

Come, death, and welcome! Juliet wills it so.
How is't, my soul? let's talk: it is not day.

*Jul.* It is, it is: hie hence, be gone, away!
It is the lark that sings so out of tune,
Straining harsh discords and unpleasing sharps.
Some say the lark makes sweet division;
This doth not so, for she divideth us:
Some say the lark and loathèd toad change eyes;
O, now I would they had changed voices too!
Since arm from arm that voice doth us affray,
Hunting thee hence with hunts-up to the day.
O, now be gone; more light and light it grows.

*Rom.* More light and light: more dark and dark our woes.

*Enter* Nurse.

*Nurse.* Madam!

*Jul.* Nurse?

*Nurse.* Your lady mother is coming to your chamber:
The day is broke; be wary, look about.

[*Exit.*

*Jul.* Then, window, let day in, and let life out.

*Rom.* Farewell, farewell! one kiss, and I'll descend.

[*Descends.*

*Jul.* Art thou gone so? my lord, my love, my friend!
I must hear from thee every day in the hour,
For in a minute there are many days:
O, by this count I shall be much in years
Ere I again behold my Romeo!

*Rom.* Farewell.

I will omit no opportunity
That may convey my greetings, love, to thee.

*Jul.* O, think'st thou we shall ever meet again?

*Rom.* I doubt it not; and all these woes shall serve
For sweet discourses in our time to come.

*Jul.* O God! I have an ill-divining soul.
Methinks I see thee, now thou art below,
As one dead in the bottom of a tomb:
Either my eyesight fails or thou look'st pale.

*Rom.* And trust me, love, in my eye so do you:
Dry sorrow drinks our blood. Adieu, adieu!
[*Exit.*

*Jul.* O fortune, fortune! all men call thee fickle:
If thou art fickle, what dost thou with him
That is renown'd for faith? Be fickle, fortune;
For then, I hope, thou wilt not keep him long,
But send him back.

Lady Capulet now enters, and later Capulet himself, and they tell Juliet she is to be married to Paris on Thursday. She protests, and Capulet insists roughly. Lady Capulet refuses to interfere. When they are gone Juliet consults with the Nurse, who advises her that as Romeo is gone, she'd perhaps better marry Paris. This angers Juliet, who says she will go to Friar Laurence.

## *ACT IV*

Scene 1. *Friar Laurence's cell.* Paris is there to ask the Friar to marry him to Juliet on Thursday, and he explains the haste as due to Juliet's excessive grief for Tybalt, which her friends would assuage by her marriage.

Juliet enters, and Paris takes his leave.

The Friar and Juliet talk it all over, and the Friar thinks of a plan which may help Juliet out of her trouble. He will give her a sleeping draught which will make her appear as dead. They will put her in the tomb, but when she awakes Romeo shall be there to take her away.

Love gives her strength, and she takes the potion and hastens away, while the Friar prepares to send word to Romeo.

SCENE 2. *At Capulet's house.* Juliet returns from the Friar's and pretends to consent to the marriage to Paris.

SCENE 3. *Juliet's chamber.* Preparations for the wedding have been made, but Juliet begs the Nurse for one night alone, to spend in prayer. So they leave her.

*Jul.* Farewell! God knows when we shall meet again.
I have a faint cold fear thrills through my veins,
That almost freezes up the heart of life:
I'll call them back again to comfort me.
Nurse!—What should she do here?
My dismal scene I needs must act alone.
Come, vial.
What if this mixture do not work at all?
Shall I be married then to-morrow morning?
No, no: this shall forbid it. Lie thou there.
[*Laying down a dagger.*
What if it be a poison, which the friar
Subtly hath minister'd to have me dead.

Lest in this marriage he should be dishonour'd,
Because he married me before to Romeo?
I fear it is: and yet, methinks, it should not,
For he hath still been tried a holy man.
How if, when I am laid into the tomb,
I wake before the time that Romeo
Come to redeem me? there's a fearful point.
Shall I not then be stifled in the vault,
To whose foul mouth no healthsome air breathes in,
And there die strangled ere my Romeo comes?
Or, if I live, is it not very like,
The horrible conceit of death and night,
Together with the terror of the place,
As, in a vault, an ancient receptacle,
Where for this many hundred years the bones
Of all my buried ancestors are pack'd;
Where bloody Tybalt, yet but green in earth,
Lies festering in his shroud; where, as they say,
At some hours in the night spirits resort;
Alack, alack, is it not like that I
So early waking, what with loathsome smells
And shrieks like mandrakes' torn out of the earth,
That living mortals hearing them run mad:
Or, if I wake, shall I not be distraught,
Environed with all these hideous fears?
And madly play with my forefathers' joints?
And pluck the mangled Tybalt from his shroud?
And, in this rage, with some great kinsman's bone,
As with a club, dash out my desperate brains?

O, look! methinks I see my cousin's ghost
Seeking out Romeo, that did spit his body
Upon a rapier's point: stay, Tybalt, stay!
Romeo, I come! this do I drink to thee.
[*She falls upon her bed, within the curtains.*

SCENE 4. *Capulet's hall.* Preparations for the marriage are going actively forward.

SCENE 5. *Juliet's chamber.* The Nurse enters and finds Juliet apparently dead. Lady Capulet comes in, and then Capulet, roughly calling her to hurry, but only to learn she is dead. Friar Laurence and Paris enter, but the wedding is changed into a funeral.

## *ACT V*

SCENE 1. *A street in Mantua.* Romeo appears, light of heart after a peculiar dream, in which he thought Juliet came and found him dead.

Balthasar comes from Verona with the news of Juliet's death, but there is no news from Friar Laurence. When Balthasar is gone to order horses, Romeo exclaims:

"Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee to-night."

He remembers an apothecary whose wretched home is near at hand. The poor fellow responds to his knocking.

*Enter* Apothecary.

*Ap.* Who calls so loud?

*Rom.* Come hither, man. I see that thou art poor;
Hold, there is forty ducats; let me have
A dram of poison; such soon-speeding gear

As will disperse itself through all the veins,
That the life-weary taker may fall dead,
And that the trunk may be discharged of breath
As violently as hasty powder fired
Doth hurry from the fatal cannon's womb.

*Ap.* Such mortal drugs I have; but Mantua's law
Is death to any he that utters them.

*Rom.* Art thou so bare and full of wretchedness,
And fear'st to die? famine is in thy cheeks,
Need and oppression starveth in thy eyes,
Contempt and beggary hangs upon thy back,
The world is not thy friend, nor the world's law:
The world affords no law to make thee rich;
Then be not poor, but break it, and take this.

*Ap.* My poverty, but not my will, consents.

*Rom.* I pay thy poverty and not thy will.

*Ap.* Put this in any liquid thing you will,
And drink it off; and, if you had the strength
Of twenty men, it would dispatch you straight.

*Rom.* There is thy gold, worse poison to men's souls,
Doing more murder in this loathsome world,
Than these poor compounds that thou mayst not sell:
I sell thee poison, thou has sold me none.
Farewell: buy food, and get thyself in flesh.
Come, cordial and not poison, go with me
To Juliet's grave; for there must I use thee.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE 2. *The cell of Friar Laurence.* Friar John returns with the message to Romeo. Fear of some

contagious disease has prevented the sending of the letter to Romeo.

SCENE 3. *A churchyard*, in front of the Capulet monument.

First appears Paris and a Page to leave flowers before the tomb of Juliet.

They hear sounds and retire, while Romeo and Balthasar come forward with mattock and wrenching iron to pry open the tomb.

*Rom.* Thou detestable maw, thou womb of death,
Gorged with the dearest morsel of the earth,
Thus I enforce thy rotten jaws to open,
And in despite I'll cram thee with more food.
[*Opens the tomb.*

*Par.* This is that banish'd haughty Montague
That murder'd my love's cousin, with which grief,
It is supposed, the fair creature died,
And here is come to do some villainous shame
To the dead bodies: I will apprehend him.
[*Comes forward.*
Stop thy unhallow'd toil, vile Montague!
Can vengeance be pursued further than death?
Condemned villain, I do apprehend thee:
Obey, and go with me, for thou must die.

*Rom.* I must indeed, and therefore came I hither.
Good gentle youth, tempt not a desperate man;
Fly hence and leave me: think upon these gone;
Let them affright thee. I beseech thee, youth,
Put not another sin upon my head,
By urging me to fury: O, be gone!
By heaven, I love thee better than myself,
For I come hither arm'd against myself:

Stay not, be gone: live, and hereafter say,
A madman's mercy bid thee run away.

But Paris calls him a felon. They fight, and Paris is slain. As he dies he asks to be laid in the tomb with Juliet, which Romeo promises.

When the body of Paris has been dragged within, and Romeo has sorrowfully recognized in him the noble kinsman of Mercutio, he turns to the figure of Juliet, which lies shrouded in flowers.

*Rom.* O my love! my wife!
Death, that hath suck'd the honey of thy breath
Hath had no power yet upon thy beauty:
Thou art not conquer'd; beauty's ensign yet
Is crimson in thy lips and in thy cheeks,
And death's pale flag is not advancèd there.
Tybalt, liest thou there in thy bloody sheet?
O, what more favour can I do to thee
Than with that hand that cut thy youth in twain
To sunder his that was thine enemy?
Forgive me, cousin! Ah, dear Juliet.
Why art thou yet so fair? shall I believe
That unsubstantial death is amorous,
And that the lean abhorred monster keeps
Thee here in dark to be his paramour?
For fear of that, I still will stay with thee,
And never from this palace of dim night
Depart again; here, here will I remain
With worms that are thy chamber-maids; O, here
Will I set up my everlasting rest,
And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars
From this world-wearied flesh. Eyes, look your last!

Arms, take your last embrace! and lips, O you
The doors of breath, seal with a righteous kiss
A dateless bargain to engrossing death!
Come, bitter conduct, come, unsavoury guide!
Thou desperate pilot, now at once run on
The dashing rocks thy sea-sick weary bark.
Here's to my love! [*Drinks.*] O true apothecary!
Thy drugs are quick. Thus with a kiss I die.
[*Dies.*

As Romeo dies, Friar Laurence enters, come to rescue Juliet when she wakes, since his messenger to Romeo has not brought her lover as he had planned.

*Fri. L.* Romeo! [*Advances.*
Alack, alack, what blood is this, which stains
The stony entrance of this sepulchre?
What mean these masterless and gory swords
To lie discolour'd by this place of peace?
[*Enter the tomb.*
Romeo! O, pale! Who else? what, Paris too?
And steep'd in blood? Ah, what an unkind hour
Is guilty of this lamentable chance!
The lady stirs. [*Juliet wakes.*

*Jul.* O comfortable friar! where is my lord?
I do remember well where I should be,
And there I am: where is my Romeo?
[*Noise within.*

*Fri. L.* I hear some noise. Lady, come from that nest
Of death, contagion, and unnatural sleep:
A greater power than we can contradict
Hath thwarted our intents: come, come away:

Thy husband in thy bosom there lies dead;
And Paris too: come, I'll dispose of thee
Among a sisterhood of holy nuns:
Stay not to question, for the watch is coming;
Come, go, good Juliet; I dare no longer stay.

*Jul.* Go, get thee hence, for I will not away.
[*Exit Fri. L.*

What's here? a cup, closed in my true love's hand?
Poison, I see, hath been his timeless end:
O churl! drunk all, and left no friendly drop
To help me after? I will kiss thy lips;
Haply some poison yet doth hang on them,
To make me die with a restorative. [*Kisses him.*
Thy lips are warm.

*First Watch.* [*Within.*] Lead, boy: which way?

*Jul.* Yea, noise? then I'll be brief. O happy dagger!
[*Snatching Romeo's dagger.*
This is thy sheath [*Stabs herself*]; there rust and let me die. [*Falls on Romeo's body, and dies.*

Here ends the play as it is usually performed in modern times, but as Shakspere wrote it the Capulets and Montagues come, and over the dead bodies of their son and daughter bury their family feud forever.

# HAMLET

## *INTRODUCTION*

Whether or not *Hamlet* is Shakspere's greatest play will never be decided, perhaps, but it is unquestionably the one great actors regard as their most ambitious role, and the one play of Shakspere's that is most studied by the thoughtful and cultured.

It has been called "the great modern soul-tragedy."

Shakspere doubtless developed his play from a previous play entitled *Hamlet's Revenge.* Very little is known of this play. The story probably came from the records of Saxo Grammaticus, a noted Danish writer, whose works were first printed in 1514. He tells the story of Hamlet, or *Amleth,* including the principal scenes of the Shaksperean play except the ghost scene and the play scene, which were invented by the Elizabethan dramatists—either Shakespere or his predecessor.

*Hamlet* was probably written, or at least perfected, by Shakspere about 1601 or 1602, five years or so after the *Merchant of Venice* and *Romeo and Juliet.* This was the date of Shakspere's greatest work, when he wrote *Julius Cæsar, Macbeth,* and *Othello.*

The play was first printed in 1603 in a curious edition, which is only about half the length, and in many respects very different from the edition published the next year, which gave us the play very much as we have it today. In this first garbled and imperfect edi-

tion Polonius is called Corambus. It seems to represent an entirely different acting version of the play, and may be supposed to be Shakspere's first effort at rewriting the older play. We see that Shakspere did not attain perfection at a bound, but got his finest effects by long and hard work.

It has been a much disputed question whether Hamlet was really insane, or only pretended he was insane. One actor has represented him as sane, and another as insane. Opinion seems to have been tending strongly toward the idea that he was sane, though under a frightful nervous strain and overwrought by the conflict of his emotions.

The motive of the play is Hamlet's lack of will power, which made him fail to do the duty laid on him by the ghost. He had all the virtues of a scholarly, high-minded, deep-seeing Prince, and yet he was not equal to the great emergency.

### *DRAMATIS PERSONÆ*

CLAUDIUS, *king of Denmark*
HAMLET, *son to the late, and nephew to the present king.*
POLONIUS, *lord chamberlain*
HORATIO, *friend to Hamlet*
LAERTES, *son to Polonius*
VOLTIMAND
CORNELIUS
ROSENCRANTZ
GUILDENSTERN
OSRIC
A GENTLEMAN
} courtiers

A Priest
Bernardo } officers
Marcellus }
Francisco, *a soldier*
Reynaldo, *servant to Polonius*
Players
Two clowns, grave-diggers
Fortinbras, *prince of Norway*
A Captain
English Ambassadors
Gertrude, *queen of Denmark, and mother to Hamlet*
Ophelia, *daughter to Polonius*

Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Sailors, Messengers, and other Attendants

Ghost of Hamlet's Father

Scene: *Denmark*

## *ACT I*

Scene 1. *Platform before the castle of Elsinore.* Francisco is relieved by Bernardo as the watch.

The air is cold and nipping. It has just struck twelve, and Francisco says, "For this relief much thanks; 'tis bitter cold, and I am sick at heart."

Horatio and Marcellus enter. Marcellus has twice seen a phantom, and Horatio has come to watch for it. Bernardo is telling what he saw at one o'clock the night before when the Ghost itself appears.

*Enter* Ghost

*Mar.* Peace, break thee off; look, where it comes again!

*Ber.* In the same figure, like the king that's dead.

*Mar.* Thou art a scholar; speak to it, Horatio.

*Ber.* Looks it not like the king? mark it, Horatio.

*Hor.* Most like: it harrows me with fear and wonder.

*Ber.* It would be spoke to.

*Mar.* Question it, Horatio.

*Hor.* What art thou, that usurp'st this time of night,
Together with that fair and warlike form
In which the majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometime march? by heaven I charge thee, speak!

*Mar.* It is offended.

*Ber.* See, it stalks away!

*Hor.* Stay! speak, speak! I charge thee, speak!
[*Exit Ghost.*

*Mar.* 'Tis gone, and will not answer.

*Ber.* How now, Horatio! you tremble and look pale;
Is not this something more than fantasy?
What think you on't?

*Hor.* Before my God, I might not this believe
Without the sensible and true avouch
Of mine own eyes.

*Mar.* Is it not like the king?

The Ghost is very like the late king Hamlet, and Horatio and Marcellus think its appearance portends some great public calamity. Fortinbras, whose father lost his lands to the old King Hamlet, is raising a rebellion, and perhaps it refers to this.

They decide to tell the young Prince Hamlet.

SCENE 2. *A room in the castle.* The King, Queen, Hamlet, and the court are there. The King sends a couple of messengers to old Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras, to ask him to restrain his nephew.

Laertes, brother of Ophelia, begs leave to return to France, whence he had come for the coronation, and the King grants his request.

Then the King turns to Hamlet.

*King.* But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son,—

*Ham.* [*Aside*] A little more than kin, and less than kind.

*King.* How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

*Ham.* Not so my lord; I am too much i' the sun.

*Queen.* Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.
Do not forever with thy veilèd lids
Seek for thy noble father in the dust:
Thou know'st 'tis common; all that live must die,
Passing through nature to eternity.

*Ham.* Ay, madam, it is common.

*Queen.* If it be,
Why seems it so particular with thee?

*Ham.* Seems, madam! nay, it is; I know not 'seems.'
'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,
Together with all forms, moods, shapes of grief,
That can denote me truly: these indeed seem,

For they are actions that a man might play:
But I have that within which passeth show;
These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

The King urges Hamlet not to grieve too much for the death of his father, and the Queen asks him as a favor to her not to go to Wittenberg. He promises to obey her wishes. The King is satisfied, and Hamlet is left alone.

*Ham.* O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw and resolve itself into a dew!
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! God!
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world!
Fie on't! ah, fie! 'tis an unweeded garden,
That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature
Possess it merely. That it should come to this!
But two months dead! nay, not so much, not two:
So excellent a king; that was, to this,
Hyperion to a satyr: so loving to my mother,
That he might not beteem the winds of heaven
Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!
Must I remember? why, she would hang on him,
As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on: and yet, within a month—
Let me not think on't—Frailty, thy name is woman!—
A little month, or ere those shoes were old
With which she follow'd my poor father's body,
Like Niobe, all tears:—why she, even she,—

O God, a beast that wants discourse of reason
Would have mourn'd longer,—married with my uncle,
My father's brother, but no more like my father
Than I to Hercules: within a month;
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
Had left the flushing of her gallèd eyes,
She married. O, most wicked speed, to post
With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!
It is not, nor it cannot come to good:
But break, my heart, for I must hold my tongue!

Horatio and Marcellus enter. Hamlet greets his old friend cordially, then asks him why he has come to Elsinore.

*Hor.* My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.
*Ham.* I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow-student;
I think it was to see my mother's wedding.
*Hor.* Indeed, my lord, it follow'd hard upon.
*Ham.* Thrift, thrift, Horatio! the funeral baked meats
Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.
Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven
Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio!
My father!—methinks I see my father—
*Hor.* O where, my lord?
*Ham.* In my mind's eye, Horatio.
*Hor.* I saw him once; he was a goodly king.
*Ham.* He was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again.
*Hor.* My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.
*Ham.* Saw? who?
*Hor.* My lord, the king your father.

And then Horatio tells of the Ghost. When the others are gone Hamlet exclaims:

My father's spirit in arms! all is not well;
I doubt some foul play: would the night were come!
Till then sit still, my soul; foul deeds will rise,
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes.

[*Exit.*

Scene 3. *A room in the house of Polonius.* Laertes is telling Ophelia not to take seriously the love-making of Hamlet.

The chariest maid is prodigal enough,
If she unmask her beauty to the moon.

Ophelia promises to heed his advice, but says:

But, good my brother,
Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven,
Whilst, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads
And recks not his own rede.

Polonius enters, and in giving his blessing to his son utters his oft-quoted advice (borrowed from Euphues):

And these few precepts in thy memory
Look thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,
Nor any unproportion'd thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.
Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel,
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment

Of each new-hatch'd unfledgèd comrade. Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel; but being in,
Bear 't, that the opposed may beware of thee.
Give every man thy ear, but few thy voice:
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy:
For the apparel oft proclaims the man;
And they in France of the best rank and station
Are of most select and generous, chief in that.
Neither a borrower nor a lender be:
For loan oft loses both itself and friend,
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
This above all: to thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.

When Laertes is gone, Polonius asks Ophelia if Hamlet has been making love to her.

*Oph.* He hath, my lord, of late made many tenders
Of his affection to me.

*Pol.* Affection! pooh! you speak like a green girl,
Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.
Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?

*Oph.* I do not know, my lord, what I should think.

*Pol.* Marry, I'll teach you; think yourself a baby,
That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly;
Or—not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Running it thus—you'll tender me a fool.

*Oph.* My lord, he hath importuned me with love
In honourable fashion.

*Pol.* Ay, fashion you may call it; go to, go to.

*Oph.* And hath given countenance to his speech, my lord,
With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

*Pol.* Ay, springes to catch woodcocks. I do know,
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
Lends the tongue vows.

He bids her have nothing more to do with Hamlet, and she promises to obey.

SCENE 4. *On the platform before the castle, at night.* Hamlet and Horatio, as well as the guard, are there to watch for the Ghost.

There is a flourish of trumpets and ordnance shot off within. Horatio asks what it means, and Hamlet tells him the King is holding wassail—"a custom more honoured in the breach than in the observance," adds Hamlet, who says the nations are taking notice of this and begin to call them drunkards.

The Ghost enters. Hamlet addresses it in tones of awe. Cold with fear, yet determined to know, he asks it what it is and whence it comes. At last the Ghost beckons him.

Half afraid, he talks with Horatio and Marcellus, who try to keep him from following. But he insists. "Unhand me, gentlemen," he cries; and to the Ghost, "Go on; I'll follow thee."

SCENE 5. *Another part of the platform. The* Ghost *and* Hamlet *alone.*

*Ham.* Whither wilt thou lead me? speak; I'll go no further.
*Ghost.* Mark me.
*Ham.* I will.
*Ghost.* My hour is almost come,
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.
*Ham.* Alas, poor ghost!
*Ghost.* Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing
To what I shall unfold.
*Ham.* Speak; I am bound to hear.
*Ghost.* So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.
*Ham.* What?
*Ghost.* I am thy father's spirit;
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night,
And for the day confined to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
Are burnt and purged away. But that I am forbid
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
I could a tale unfold whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres,
Thy knotted and combinèd locks to part
And each particular hair to stand an end,
Like quills upon the fretful porpentine:
But this eternal blazon must not be
To ears of flesh and blood. List, list, O, list!
If thou didst ever thy dear father love—
*Ham.* O God!
*Ghost.* Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

*Ham.* Murder!

*Ghost.* Murder most foul, as in the best it is,
But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.

*Ham.* Haste me to know't, that I, with wings as swift
As meditation or the thoughts of love,
May sweep to my revenge.

*Ghost.* I find thee apt;
And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed
That roots itself in ease on Lethe's wharf,
Wouldst thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet, hear:
'Tis given out that, sleeping in my orchard,
A serpent stung me; so the whole ear of Denmark
Is by a forged process of my death
Rankly abused: but know, thou noble youth,
The serpent that did sting thy father's life
Now wears his crown.

*Ham.* O my prophetic soul!
My Uncle!

*Ghost.* Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts.—
O wicked wit and gifts, that have the power
So to seduce!—won to his shameful lust
The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen:
O Hamlet, what a falling-off was there!
From me, whose love was of that dignity
That it went hand in hand even with the vow
I made to her in marriage; and to decline
Upon a wretch whose natural gifts were poor
To those of mine!
But virtue, as it never will be moved,

Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven,
So lust, though to a radiant angel link'd,
Will sate itself in a celestial bed
And prey on garbage.
But, soft! methinks I scent the morning air;
Brief let me be. Sleeping within my orchard,
My custom always of the afternoon,
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of cursèd hebenon in a vial,
And in the porches of my ears did pour
The leprous distilment; whose effect
Holds such an enmity with blood of man
That swift as quicksilver it courses through
The natural gates and alleys of the body;
And with a sudden vigour it doth posset
And curd, like eager droppings into milk,
The thin and wholesome blood: so did it mine;
And a most instant tetter bark'd about,
Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust,
All my smooth body.
Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand
Of life, of crown, of queen, at once dispatch'd:
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
Unhousel'd, disappointed, unaneled;
No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head:
O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!
If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not;
Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
A couch for luxury and damnèd incest.
But, howsoever thou pursuest this act,
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive

Against thy mother aught: leave her to heaven,
And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,
To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once!
The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,
And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire:
Adieu, adieu, adieu! remember me. [*Exit.*

*Ham.* O all you host of heaven! O earth! what else?
And shall I couple hell? O, fie! Hold, hold, my heart;
And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
But bear me stiffly up. Remember thee!
Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe. Remember thee!
Yea, from the table of my memory
I'll wipe away trivial fond records,
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past
That youth and observation copied there;
And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain,
Unmix'd with baser matter: yes, by heaven!
O most pernicious woman!
O villain, villain, smiling, damnèd villain!
My tables,—meet it is I set it down,
That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;
At least I'm sure it may be so in Denmark.
[*Writing.*
So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word;
It is 'Adieu, adieu! remember me.'

Horatio and Marcellus enter, and eagerly question Hamlet, who speaks somewhat wildly,—says they will reveal it.

*Hor.* Not I, my lord, by heaven.
*Mar.* Nor I, my lord.
*Ham.* How say you, then; would heart of man once think it?
But you'll be secret?
*Hor.* } Ay, by heaven, my lord.
*Mar.* }
*Ham.* There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Denmark
But he's an arrant knave.
*Hor.* There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the grave
To tell us this.
*Ham.* Why, right; you are i' the right;
And so, without more circumstance at all,
I hold it fit that we shake hands and part:
You, as your business and desire shall point you;
For every man hath business and desire,
Such as it is; and for my own poor part,
Look you, I'll go pray.
*Hor.* These are but wild and whirling words, my lord.
*Ham.* I'm sorry they offend you, heartily;
Yes, faith, heartily.
*Hor.* There's no offence, my lord.
*Ham.* Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is, Horatio,
And much offence too. Touching this vision here,
It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you:
For your desire to know what is between us,
O'ermaster't as you may. And now, good friends,
As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,
Give me one poor request.

*Hor.* What is 't, my lord? we will.
*Ham.* Never make known what you have seen to-night.
*Hor.* } My lord, we will not.
*Mar.* }
*Ham.* Nay, but swear 't.
*Hor.* In faith.
My lord, not I.
*Mar.* Nor I, my lord, in faith.
*Ham.* Upon my sword.
*Mar.* We have sworn, my lord, already.
*Ham.* Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.
*Ghost.* [*Beneath*] Swear.
*Ham.* Ah, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou there, true-penny?
Come on: you hear this fellow in the cellarage;
Consent to swear.
*Hor.* Propose the oath, my lord.
*Ham.* Never to speak of this that you have seen.
Swear by my sword.
*Ghost.* [*Beneath*] Swear.
A third, a fourth time the Ghost bids them swear.
*Ham.* Rest, rest, perturbed spirit. [*They swear.*]
So gentlemen,
With all my love I do commend me to you:
And what so poor a man as Hamlet is
May do to express his love and friending to you,
God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together;
And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.
The time is out of joint: O cursèd spite,

That ever I was born to set it right!
Nay, come, let's go together. [*Exeunt.*

## *ACT II*

SCENE 1. *A room in the house of Polonius.* Polonius is sending a messenger to spy out Laertes and see that he is up to no mischief.

*Enter* Ophelia

*Pol.* How, now, Ophelia! what's the matter?
*Oph.* O, my lord, my lord, I have been so affrighted!
*Pol.* With what, i' the name of God?
*Oph.* My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,
Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbraced,
No hat upon his head, his stockings foul'd,
Ungarter'd and down-gyvèd to his ancle;
Pale as his shirt, his knees knocking each other,
And with a look so piteous in purport
As if he had been loosed out of hell
To speak of horrors, he comes before me.
*Pol.* Mad for thy love?
*Oph.* My lord, I do not know,
But truly I do fear it.
*Pol.* What said he?
*Oph.* He took me by the wrist and held me hard;
Then goes he to the length of all his arm,
And with his other hand thus o'er his brow,
He falls to such perusal of my face
As he would draw it. Long stay'd he so;
At last, a little shaking of mine arm,
And thrice his head thus waving up and down,
He raised a sigh so piteous and profound

As it did seem to shatter all his bulk
And end his being: that done, he lets me go:
And with his head over his shoulder turn'd,
He seem'd to find his way without his eyes;
For out o' doors he went without their help,
And to the last bended their light on me.

*Pol.* Come, go with me: I will go seek the king.
This is the very ecstasy of love;
Whose violent property fordoes itself
And leads the will to desperate undertakings
As oft as any passion under heaven
That does afflict our natures. I am sorry.
What, have you given him any hard words of late?

*Oph.* No, my good lord, but, as you did command,
I did repel his letters and denied
His access to me.

*Pol.* That hath made him mad.
I am sorry that with better heed and judgment
I had not quoted him: I fear'd he did but trifle
And meant to wreck thee; but beshrew my jealousy!
By heaven, it is as proper to our age
To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions
As it is common for the younger sort
To lack discretion. Come, go we to the king:
This must be known; which, being kept close, might move
More grief to hide than hate to utter love.
Come. [*Exeunt.*

Scene 2. The King and Queen welcome Rosen-

crantz and Guildenstern, who are bidden to try to divert Hamlet.

Messengers from Norway report success, and that Fortinbras has promised never again to take up arms against Denmark.

And then Polonius tells their majesties that he has found out all about Hamlet's indisposition. He then proceeds to tell them what's the matter.

*Pol.* My liege, and madam, to expostulate
What majesty should be, what duty is,
Why day is day, night night, and time is time,
Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time.
Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,
I will be brief. Your noble son is mad:
Mad call I it; for, to define true madness,
What is't but to be nothing else but mad?
But let that go.

*Queen.* More matter, with less art.

*Pol.* Madam, I swear I use no art at all.
That he is mad, 'tis true: 'tis true 'tis pity,
And pity 'tis 'tis true: a foolish figure;
But farewell it, for I will use no art.

Polonius says Hamlet is mad for love of his daughter, and proves it by reading extracts from Hamlet's letters and verses.

To test the matter he will loose his daughter to Hamlet, and he and the King will be hidden behind the arras to see what happens.

*Enter* Hamlet, *reading.*

*Pol.* O, give me leave: how does my good Lord Hamlet?
*Ham.* Well, God-a-mercy.
*Pol.* Do you know me my lord?
*Ham.* Excellent well; you are a fishmonger.
*Pol.* Not I, my lord.
*Ham.* Then I would you were so honest a man.
*Pol.* Honest, my lord!
*Ham.* Ay, sir; to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of ten thousand.
*Pol.* That's very true, my lord.
*Ham.* For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a god kissing carrion—Have you a daughter?
*Pol.* I have, my lord.
*Ham.* Let her not walk i' the sun: conception is a blessing; but as your daughter may conceive,—friend, look to 't.
*Pol.* [*Aside*] How say you by that? Still harping on my daughter: yet he knew me not at first; he said I was a fishmonger: he is far gone: and truly in my youth I suffered much extremity for love; very near this. I'll speak to him again.—What do you read, my lord?
*Ham.* Words, words, words.
*Pol.* What is the matter, my lord?
*Ham.* Between who?
*Pol.* I mean, the matter that you read, my lord.
*Ham.* Slanders, sir: for the satirical rogue says here that old men have grey beards, that their faces are wrinkled, their eyes purging thick amber and plum-tree gum, and that they have a plenti-

ful lack of wit, together with most weak hams; all of which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down; for yourself, sir, shall grow old as I am, if like a crab you could go backward.

*Pol.* [*Aside*] Though this be madness, yet there is method in 't.—Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

*Ham.* Into my grave.

*Pol.* Indeed, that's out of the air. [*Aside*] How pregnant sometimes his replies are! a happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter.—My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.

*Ham.* You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will more willingly part withal: except my life, except my life, except my life.

*Pol.* Fare you well, my lord. [*Exit.*

*Ham.* These tedious old fools!

Then enter Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. They are old friends of Hamlet's, and he greets them accordingly. He asks them why fortune sends them hither to prison. Denmark's a prison, he tells them. They think not so, and Hamlet says, "Why, then 't is none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so; to me it is a prison."

At last he asks them bluntly if they were not sent for.

*Guil.* What should we say, my lord?

*Ham.* Why, any thing, but to the purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks, which your modesties have not craft enough to colour: I know the good king and queen have sent for you.

*Ros.* To what end, my lord?

*Ham.* That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preservèd love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for or no.

*Ros.* [*Aside to Guil.*] What say you?

*Ham.* [*Aside*] Nay then, I have an eye of you.—
If you love me, hold not off.

*Guil.* My lord, we were sent for.

*Ham.* I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather. I have of late —but wherefore I know not—lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man! how noble in reason! how

infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? man delights not me; no, nor woman neither, though by your smiling you seem to say so.

*Ros.* My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

*Ham.* Why did you laugh, then, when I said 'man delights not me'?

*Ros.* To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten entertainment the players shall receive from you: we coted them on the way; and hither are they coming, to offer you service.

Hamlet is delighted to hear of the coming of the players, and talks for a time about them. He asks his friends to look out for the players, and ends—

*Ham.* You are welcome: but my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceived.

*Guil.* In what, my dear lord?

*Ham.* I am but mad north-north-west: when the wind is southerly I know a hawk from a handsaw.

Polonius announces the approach of the players, who immediately appear. Hamlet makes them say some speeches. Polonius grows impatient, and at last Hamlet dismisses them, begging Polonius to use them well, "for they are the abstract and brief chronicles of the time; after your death you were better have a bad epitaph than their ill report while you live." He says they'll hear a play to-morrow. After Polonius is gone

with all except the first player, Hamlet asks this one if he can play the Murder of Gonzago. Alone he explains his idea as he muses:

*Ham.* Hum, I have heard
That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,
Have by the very cunning of the scene
Been struck so to the soul that presently
They have proclaim'd their malefactions;
For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak
With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players
Play something like the murder of my father
Before mine uncle: I'll observe his looks;
I'll tent him to the quick: if he but blench,
I know my course. The spirit that I have seen
May be the devil; and the devil hath power
To assume a pleasing shape; yea, and perhaps
Out of my weakness and my melancholy,
As he is very potent with such spirits,
Abuses me to damn me. I'll have grounds
More relative than this. The play's the thing
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.
[*Exit.*

## *ACT III*

Scene 1. *A room in the castle.* Rosencrantz and Guildenstern report to the King and Queen their success with Hamlet. Polonius is ready to loose Ophelia to Hamlet. The Queen goes out.

*Pol.* Ophelia, walk you here. Gracious, so please you,

We will bestow ourselves. [*To Ophelia.*] Read
on this book,
That show of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness. We are oft to blame in this,—
'Tis too much proved—that with devotion's visage
And pious action we do sugar o'er
The devil himself.

*King.* [*Aside*] O, 'tis too true!
How smart a lash that speech doth give my con-
science!
The harlot's cheek, beautied with plastering art,
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it
Than is my deed to my most painted word:
O heavy burthen!

*Pol.* I hear him coming: let's withdraw, my lord.

[*Exeunt King and Polonius.*

*Enter* Hamlet.

*Ham.* To be, or not to be: that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them. To die: to sleep;
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep;
To sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause: there's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life;
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,

The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscover'd country from whose bourn
No traveller returns, puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pith and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry
And lose the name of action. Soft you now!
The fair Ophelia! Nymph, in thy orisons
Be all my sins remember'd

*Oph.* Good my lord,
How does your honour for this many a day?

*Ham.* I humbly thank you: well, well, well.

*Oph.* My lord, I have remembrances of yours
That I have longed long to re-deliver;
I pray you, now receive them.

*Ham.* No, not I;
I never gave you aught.

*Oph.* My honour'd lord, you know right well you did;

And with them words of so sweet breath composed
As made the things more rich: their perfume lost,
Take these again; for to the noble mind
Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.
There, my lord.

*Ham.* Ha, ha! are you honest?

*Oph.* My lord?

*Ham.* Are you fair?

*Oph.* What means your lordship?

*Ham.* That if you be honest and fair, your honesty should admit no discourse to your beauty.

*Oph.* Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce than with honesty?

*Ham.* Ay, truly; for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd than the force of honesty can translate a beauty into his likeness: this was sometimes a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love you once.

*Oph.* Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

*Ham.* You should not have believed me; for virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock but we shall relish of it: I loved you not.

*Oph.* I was the more deceived.

*Ham.* Get thee to a nunnery: why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest; but yet I could accuse me of such things that it were better my mother had not borne me: I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious; with more offences at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape,

or time to act them in. What should such a fellow as I do crawling between heaven and earth! We are arrant knaves all; believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery. Where's your father?

*Oph.* At home, my lord.

*Ham.* Let the doors be shut upon him, that he may play the fool nowhere but in 's own house. Farewell.

*Oph.* O, help him, you sweet heavens!

*Ham.* If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowery: be thou chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery, go; farewell. Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go; and quickly too. Farewell.

*Oph.* O heavenly powers, restore him!

*Ham.* I have heard of your paintings too, well enough; God hath given you one face and you make yourselves another: you jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nick-name God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance. Go to, I'll no more on't; it hath made me mad. I say, we will have no more marriages: those that are married already, all but one, shall live; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go.

[*Exit.*

*Oph.* O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!
The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword:

The expectancy and rose of this fair state,
The glass of fashion and the mould of form,
The observed of all observers, quite, quite down!
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,
That suck'd the honey of his music vows,
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh;
That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth
Blasted with ecstacy: O, woe is me,
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

*Re-enter* King *and* Polonius.

*King.* Love! his affections do not that way tend;
Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,
Was not like madness. There's something in his soul
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood,
And I do doubt the hatch and the disclose
Will be some danger.

As a result, the King determines to send Hamlet speedily to England. Polonius suggests that the Queen shall have a talk with Hamlet alone after the play, however.

SCENE 2. *A hall in the castle.*

*Enter* Hamlet *and* Players.

*Ham.* Speak, the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on your tongue; but if you mouth it, as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus; but use all gently: for in the very torrent tempest, and, as I may say, whirlwind of your passion,

you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ear of the groundlings, who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb-shows and noise: I would have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing Termagant; it outherods Herod: pray you, avoid it.

*First Play.* I warrant your honour.

*Ham.* Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature: for anything so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. Now this overdone or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of the which one must in your allowance o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly, not to speak it profanely, that neither having the accent of Christians nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed, that I thought some of nature's journeymen had made men, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

*First Play.* I hope we have reformed that indifferently with us, sir.

*Ham.* O, reform it altogether. And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them: for there be of them that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too, though in the mean time some necessary question of the play be then to be considered: that's villainous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready. [*Exeunt Players.*

*Enter* Polonius, Rosencrantz, *and Guildenstern.*

How now, my lord, will the king hear this piece of work?

*Pol.* And the queen, too, and that presently.

*Ham.* Bid the players make haste. [*Exit Polonius.*

Will you two help to hasten them?

*Ros.* } We will, my lord.
*Guil.* }

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*

*Ham.* What ho! Horatio!

*Enter* Horatio.

*Hor.* Here, sweet lord, at your service.

*Ham.* Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man
As e'er my conversation coped withal.

*Hor.* O, my dear lord,—

*Ham.* Nay, do not think I flatter;
For what advancement may I hope from thee,
That no revenue hast but thy good spirits,
To feed and clothe thee? Why should the poor be flatter'd?
No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp.

And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee
Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou hear?
Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice,
And could of men distinguish, her election
Hath seal'd thee for herself: for thou hast been
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing;
A man that fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks: and blest are those
Whose blood and judgment are so well commingled
That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please. Give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
As I do thee.

Something too much of this.
There is a play to-night before the king;
One scene of it comes near the circumstance
Which I have told thee of my father's death:
I prithee, when thou seest that act a-foot,
Even with the very comment of thy soul
Observe my uncle: if his occulted guilt
Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
It is a damnèd ghost that we have seen,
And my imaginations are as foul
As Vulcan's stithy. Give him heedful note;
For I mine eyes will rivet to his face,
And after we will both our judgments join
In censure of his seeming.

*Hor.* Well, my lord:

If he steal aught the whilst this play is playing,
And 'scape detecting, I will pay the theft.

*Ham.* They are coming to the play: I must be idle:
Get you a place.

*Danish march. A flourish. Enter* King, Queen, Polonius, Ophelia, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, *and other Lords attendant, with the Guard carrying torches.*

*King.* How fares our cousin Hamlet?

*Ham.* Excellent, i' faith; of the chameleon's dish: I eat the air, promise-crammed; you cannot feed capons so.

*King.* I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet; these words are not mine.

*Ham.* No, nor mine now. [*To Polonius.*] My lord, you played once i' the university, you say?

*Pol.* That did I, my lord, and was accounted a good actor.

*Ham.* What did you enact?

*Pol.* I did enact Julius Cæsar: I was killed i' the Capitol; Brutus killed me.

*Ham.* It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there. Be the players ready?

*Ros.* Ay, my lord; they stay upon your patience.

*Queen.* Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

*Ham.* No, good mother, here's metal more attractive.

*Pol.* [*To the King*] O, ho! do you mark that?

*Ham.* Lady, shall I lie in your lap?

[*Lying down at Ophelia's feet.*

The play is enacted in dumb-show and then in the regular way. The King is a little suspicious, and asks Hamlet what the name of the play is. He is told it

is "The Mouse-trap," adding, "Let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung." But when the villain pours the poison in the player king's ear, the King rises excitedly, calls for lights, and the scene is ended. Hamlet and Horatio alone remain, and Hamlet sings,—

*Ham.* Why, let the stricken deer go weep,
The hart ungallèd play;
For some must watch, while some must sleep:
Thus runs the world away.

And he says he'll take the Ghost's word for a thousand pounds,—the King's guilt is clearly proved.

Presently come Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, telling Hamlet his mother is much amazed, and otherwise trying to draw him out, while Hamlet stuffs them with all sorts of chaff.

Just then the players re-enter with recorders, and he takes one. Then addressing Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, he says,

*Ham.* Why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?

*Guil.* O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

*Ham.* I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

*Guil.* My lord, I cannot.

*Ham.* I pray you.

*Guil.* Believe me, I cannot.

*Ham.* I do beseech you.

*Guil.* I know no touch of it, my lord.

*Ham.* It is as easy as lying: govern these ventages with your fingers and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops.

*Guil.* But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

*Ham.* Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me! You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass: and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ; yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood, do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, yet you cannot play upon me.

*Re-enter* Polonius.

God bless you, sir!

*Pol.* My lord, the queen would speak with you, and presently.

*Ham.* Do you see yonder cloud that's almost in shape of a camel?

*Pol.* By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed.

*Ham.* Me thinks it is like a weasel.

*Pol.* It is backed like a weasel.

*Ham.* Or like a whale.

*Pol.* Very like a whale.

*Ham.* Then I will come to my mother by and by. They fool me to the top of my bent. I will come by and by.

*Pol.* I will say so. [*Exit Polonius.*

*Ham.* 'By and by' is easily said. Leave me, friends.
[*Exeunt all but Hamlet.*

'Tis now the very witching time of night,
When churchyards yawn, and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world: now could I drink hot blood,
And do such bitter business as the day
Would quake to look on. Soft! now to my mother.
O heart, lose not thy nature; let not ever
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom:
Let me be cruel, not unnatural:
I will speak daggers to her, but use none;
My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites:
How in my words soever she be shent,
To give them seals, never, my soul, consent!
[*Exit.*

SCENE 3. *A room in the castle.* The king tells Rosencrantz and Guildenstern he will commission them to take Hamlet to England, as he is dangerous and should be out of the way.

Polonius says he will stow himself behind the arras in the Queen's closet and hear what Hamlet says to her.

Left alone the King lets his guilty conscience speak:

O, my offense is rank, it smells to heaven;
It hath the primal eldest curse upon 't,
A brother's murder.

He tries to pray but cannot.

And as he kneels comes Hamlet, who has just the chance he has been lacking to kill the King as he kneels. But his intellect misleads him. He reasons that his father was killed with all his sins full-blown, as flush as May, and to kill the King while at prayer would be giving him an unjust advantage.

So he puts it off for a more convenient time.

SCENE 4. *The Queen's closet.* The Queen hides Polonius behind the arras.

*Enter* Hamlet.

*Ham.* Now, mother, what's the matter?

*Queen.* Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

*Ham.* Mother, you have my father much offended.

*Queen.* Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

*Ham.* Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

*Queen.* Why, how now, Hamlet!

*Ham.* What's the matter now?

*Queen.* Have you forgot me?

*Ham.* No, by the rood, not so:
You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife;
And would it were not so!—you are my mother.

*Queen.* Nay, then, I'll set those to you that can speak.

*Ham.* Come, come, sit you down; you shall not budge;
You go not till I set you up a glass
Where you may see the inmost part of you.

*Queen.* What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murder me?
Help, help, no!

*Pol.* [*Behind*] What, ho! help, help, help!
*Ham.* [*Drawing*] How now! a rat? Dead, for a ducat, dead! [*Makes a pass through the arras.*
*Pol.* [*Behind*] O, I am slain! [*Falls and dies.*
*Queen.* O me, what hast thou done?
*Ham.* Nay, I know not: is it the king?
*Queen.* O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!
*Ham.* A bloody deed! almost as bad, good mother,
As kill a king, and marry with his brother.
*Queen.* As kill a king!
*Ham.* Ay, lady, 'twas my word.
[*Lifts up the arras and discovers Polonius.*
Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!
I took thee for thy better: take thy fortune;
Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger.
Leave wringing of your hands: peace! sit you down,
And let me wring your heart: for so I shall,
If it be made of penetrable stuff;
If damned custom have not brass'd it so,
That it be proof and bulwark against sense.
*Queen.* What have I done, that thou darest wag thy tongue
In noise so rude against me?
*Ham.* Such an act
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty,
Calls virtue hypocrite, takes off the rose
From the fair forehead of an innocent love,
And sets a blister there; makes marriage vows
As false as dicers' oaths: O, such a deed
As from the body of contraction plucks
The very soul, and sweet religion makes

A rhapsody of words: heaven's face doth glow;
Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
With tristful visage, as against the doom,
Is thought-sick at the act.
*Queen.* Ay me, what act,
That roars so loud and thunders in the index?
*Ham.* Look here, upon this picture, and on this
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
See what a grace was seated on this brow;
Hyperion's curls, the front of Jove himself,
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;
A station like the herald Mercury
New lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;
A combination and a form indeed,
Where every god did seem to set his seal
To give the world assurance of a man:
This was your husband. Look you now, what follows:
Here is your husband; like a mildew'd ear,
Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes?
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
And batten on this moor? Ha! have you eyes?
You cannot call it love, for at your age
The hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble,
And waits upon the judgment: and what judgment
Would step from this to this? Sense sure you have,
Else could you not have motion: but sure that sense
Is apoplex'd: for madness would not err,
Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'r so thrall'd

But it reserved some quantity of choice,
To serve in such a difference. What devil was't
That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind?
Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,
Or but a sickly part of one true sense
Could not so mope.
O shame! where is thy blush? Rebellious hell,
If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,
To flaming youth let virtue be as wax
And melt in her own fire: proclaim no shame
When the compulsive ardour gives the charge,
Since frost itself as actively doth burn,
And reason panders will.

*Queen.* O Hamlet, speak no more:
Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul,
And there I see such black and grainèd spots
As will not leave their tinct.

*Ham.* Nay, but to live
In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed,
Stew'd in corruption, honeying and making love
Over the nasty sty,—

*Queen* O, speak to me no more;
These words like daggers enter in my ears;
No more, sweet Hamlet!

*Ham.* A murderer and a villain;
A slave that is not twentieth part the tithe
Of your precedent lord; a vice of kings;
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole
And put it in his pocket!

*Queen.* No more!

*Ham.* A king of shreds and patches—
*Enter* Ghost.
Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,
You heavenly guards! What would your gracious figure?
*Queen.* Alas, he's mad!
*Ham.* Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
That, lapsed in time and passion, lets go by
The important acting of your dread command?
O say!
*Ghost.* Do not forget: this visitation
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.
But look, amazement on thy mother sits:
O, step between her and her fighting soul:
Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works:
Speak to her, Hamlet.
*Ham.* How is it with you, lady?
*Queen.* Alas, how is 't with you,
That you do bend your eye on vacancy
And with the incorporal air do hold discourse?
Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep;
And, as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm,
Your bedded hairs, like life in excrements,
Stand up and stand an end. O gentle son
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?
*Ham.* On him, on him! Look you how pale he glares!
His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,
Would make them capable. Do not look upon me,
Lest with this piteous action you convert

My stern effects: then what I have to do
Will want true colour; tears perchance for blood.

*Queen.* To whom do you speak this?

*Ham.* Do you see nothing there?

*Queen.* Nothing at all; yet all that is I see.

*Ham.* Nor did you nothing hear?

*Queen.* No, nothing but ourselves.

*Ham.* Why, look you there! look, how it steals away!
My father, in his habit as he lived!
Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal!
[*Exit Ghost.*

She thinks he's mad, but he goes pitilessly on in his arraignment.

*Queen.* O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain.

*Ham.* O, throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half.
Good night: but go not to my uncle's bed;
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.

* * * * *

*Ham.* I must to England; you know that?

*Queen.* Alack!
I had forgot: 'tis so concluded on.

*Ham.* There's letters seal'd; and my two school-fellows,
Whom I will trust as I will adders fang'd,
They bear the mandate; they must sweep my way,
And marshal me to knavery. Let it work;
For 'tis the sport to have the enginer
Hoist with his own petar: and 't shall go hard
But I will delve one yard below their mines,

And blow them at the moon: O, 'tis most sweet
When in one line two crafts directly meet.
This man shall set me packing:
I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room.
Mother, good night. Indeed this counsellor
Is now most still, most secret and most grave,
Who was in life a foolish prating knave.
Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you.
Good night, mother.

[*Exeunt severally; Hamlet dragging in Polonius.*

## *ACT IV*

SCENE 1. *A room in the castle.* The Queen comes from her closet to report to the King her interview with Hamlet, and tells how he killed Polonius. This act makes them both believe he is stark mad. And as the King sends Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to find Hamlet and see what he has done with the body of Polonius, he says to his wife—

O, come away!
My soul is full of discord and dismay.

SCENE 2. *Another room.* Hamlet has just stowed away the body of Polonius, and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern come in and ask him where it is. Hamlet chaffs them. He objects—

*Ham.* To be demanded of a sponge! What replication should be made by the son of a king?

*Ros.* Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

*Ham.* Ay, sir; that soaks up the king's countenance,

his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the king best service in the end; he keeps them, like an ape, in the corner of his jaw; first mouthed to be last swallowed: when he needs what you have gleaned it is but squeezing you, and, sponge you shall be dry again.

*Ros.* I understand you not, my lord.

*Ham.* I am glad of it: a knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.

SCENE 3. *Another room.* The King hears the report of Rosencrantz, and Hamlet is brought in.

*King.* Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius?

*Ham.* At supper.

*King.* At supper! where?

*Ham.* Not where he eats, but where he is eaten: a certain convocation of public worms are e'en at him. Your worm is your only emperor for diet: we fat all creatures else to fat us, and we fat ourselves for maggots: your fat king and your lean beggar is but variable service, two dishes, but to one table: that's the end.

*King.* Alas, alas!

*Ham.* A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king, and eat of the fish that hath fed on that worm.

*King.* What dost thou mean by this?

*Ham.* Nothing but to show you how a king may go a progress through the guts of a beggar.

*King.* Where is Polonius?

*Ham.* In heaven; send thither to see: if your messenger find him not there, seek him i' the other

place yourself. But indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

There they find Polonius. And when all are gone, the King soliloquizes to the effect that he has arranged for the present death of Hamlet in England.

SCENE 4. *A plain in Denmark.* Hamlet is departing for England with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, when they meet Fortinbras, who is off on an expedition merely for glory, to recover some useless land from the Polacks. It is a lesson to Hamlet, who, left alone, muses thus:

How all occasions do inform against me,
And spur my dull revenge! What is a man,
If his chief good and market of his time
Be but to sleep and feed? a beast, no more.
Sure, he that made us with such large discourse,
Looking before and after, gave us not
That capability and god-like reason
To rust in us unused. Now, whether it be
Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple
Of thinking too precisely on the event,—
A thought which, quarter'd, hath but one part wisdom
And three parts coward,—I do not know
Why yet I live to say 'this thing's to do,'
Sith I have cause, and will, and strength and means,
To do 't. Examples gross as earth exhort me:
Witness this army, of such mass and charge,
Led by a delicate and tender prince,

Whose spirit with divine ambition puff'd
Makes mouths at the invisible event,
Exposing what is moral and unsure.
To all that fortune, death and danger dare,
Even for an egg-shell. Rightly to be great
Is not to stir without great argument,
But greatly to find quarrel in a straw
When honour's at the stake. How stand I then,
That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,
Excitements of my reason and my blood,
And let all sleep, while to my shame I see
The imminent death of twenty thousand men,
That for a fantasy and trick of fame
Go to their graves like beds, fight for a plot
Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,
Which is not tomb enough and continent
To hide the slain? O, from this time forth,
My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth!
[*Exit.*

Scene 5. *A room in the castle.* The Queen is with Horatio, when she is told Ophelia wishes to see her, and he says,

*Hor.* 'Twere good she were spoken with, for she may strew
Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds.

*Queen.* Let her come in. [*Exit Gentleman.*
[*Aside*] To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,
Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss:
So full of artless jealousy is guilt,
It spills itself in fearing to be spilt.

*Re-enter* Gentleman, *with Ophelia.*

*Oph.* Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark?

*Queen.* How now, Ophelia!

*Oph.* [*Sings*] How should I your true love know
From another one?
By his cockle hat and staff
And his sandal shoon.

*Queen.* Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song?

*Oph.* Say you? nay, pray you, mark.
[*Sings*] He is dead and gone, lady,
He is dead and gone;
At his head a grass-green turf,
At his heels a stone.
Oh, oh!

*Queen.* Nay, but Ophelia,—

*Oph.* Pray you, mark.
[*Sings*] White his shroud as the mountain snow,—

*Enter* King.

*Queen.* Alas, look here, my lord.

*Oph.* [*Sings*] Larded with sweet flowers;
Which bewept to the grave did go
With true-love showers.

*King.* How do you, pretty lady?

*Oph.* Well, God 'ild you! They say the owl was a baker's daughter. Lord, we know what we are, but not what we may be. God be at your table!

*King.* Conceit upon her father.

*Oph.* Pray you, let's have no words of this; but when they ask you what it means, say you this:
[*Sings*] To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day,
All in the morning betime,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine.

Then up he rose, and donn'd his clothes,
And dupp'd the chamber-door;
Let in the maid, that out a maid
Never departed more.*

*King.* Pretty Ophelia.

*Oph.* Indeed, la, without an oath, I'll make an end on 't:

[*Sings*] By Gis and by Saint Charity,
Alack, and fie for shame!
Young men will do't, if they come to't;
By cock, they are to blame.
Quothe she, before you tumbled me,
You promised me to wed.

He answers:

So would I ha' done, by yonder sun,
An' thou hadst not come to my bed.

*King.* How long hath she been thus?

*Oph.* I hope all will be well. We must be patient: but I cannot choose but weep, to think they should lay him i' the cold ground. My brother shall know of it: and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach! Good night, ladies; good night, sweet ladies; good night, good night. [*Exit.*

The King realizes that the people may be up in arms over the death of Polonius and the hasty sending of Hamlet to England, and as he speaks of these things comes news that Laertes is returned in hot haste to revenge the death of his father, and the people cry "Laertes shall be king."

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*This lewd song from the pure-minded Ophelia doubles the pity of the scene.

When Laertes enters the king requires all his diplomacy to quiet him. And when the Queen gets nervous he reminds her, "There's such divinity doth hedge a king" that his person is in no danger.

*Re-enter* Ophelia *Singing.*

*Oph.* [*Sings*] They bore him barefaced on the bier:
Hey non nonny, nonny, hey nonny:
And in his grave rain'd many a tear,—
Fare you well, my dove!

*Laer.* Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade revenge,
It could not move thus.

*Oph.* [*Sings*] You must sing a-down,
An you call him a-down-a.
O, how the wheel becomes it! It is the false steward, that stole his master's daughter.

*Laer.* This nothing's more than matter.

*Oph.* There's rosemary, that's for remembrance: pray you, love, remember: and there is pansies, that's for thoughts.

*Laer.* A document in madness; thoughts and remembrance fitted.

*Oph.* There's fennel for you, and columbines: there's rue for you: and here's some for me: we may call it herb of grace o' Sundays: O, you must wear your rue with a difference. There's a daisy: I would give you some violets, but they withered all when my father died: they say a' made a good end,—
[*Sings*] For bonnie sweet Robin is all my joy.

*Laer.* Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself,
She turns to favour and to prettiness.

*Oph.* [*Sings*] And will a' not come again?
And will a' not come again?
No, no, he is dead,
Go to thy deathbed,
He never will come again.
His beard was as white as snow,
All flaxen was his poll:
He is gone, he is gone,
And we cast away moan:
God ha' mercy on his soul!

And of all Christian souls, I pray God. God be wi' you.

SCENE 6. *Another room in the castle.* Horatio receives a letter from Hamlet telling him he is returning to Elsinore, while Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are still on their way to England. They met a pirate ship, as the two boats came together Hamlet boarded the other, when instantly they cast off, and he was brought back to Denmark.

SCENE 7. *A room in the castle.* The King has about persuaded Laertes that it was Hamlet killed Polonius, when there comes a letter to the King from Hamlet, telling of his return.

The King is frightened, but Laertes jumps at the idea of getting his revenge. They plan that Laertes and Hamlet shall have a bout with the foils, and Laertes's foil shall have no button, and besides be poisoned.

*Enter* Queen.

*King.* How now, sweet queen!

*Queen.* One woe doth tread upon another's heel.
So fast they follow: your sister's drown'd,
Laertes.

*Laer.* Drown'd: O, where?

*Queen.* There is a willow grows aslant a brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;
There with fantastic garlands did she come
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples,
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call
them:
There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke;
When down her weedy trophies and herself
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread
wide,
And mermaid-like a while they bore her up:
Which time she chanted snatches of old tunes,
As one incapable of her own distress,
Or like a creature native and indued
Unto that element: but long it could not be
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.

*Laer.* Alas, then she is drown'd!

*Queen.* Drown'd, drown'd.

*Laer.* Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
And therefore I forbid my tears: but yet
It is our trick; nature her custom holds,
Let shame say what it will: when these are gone,
The woman will be out. Adieu, my lord.

## *ACT V*

SCENE 1. *A churchyard.* Two clowns are digging the grave for Ophelia, who would not be buried in Christian burial were she not the daughter of a lord. The two clowns discuss the law of the case.

*Enter* Hamlet *and* Horatio.

*First Clo.* In youth, when I did love, did love.
Methought it was very sweet,
To contract, O, the time, for-a my behove,
O, methought, there-a was nothing-a meet.

*Ham.* Has this fellow no feeling of his business, that he sings at grave-making?

*Hor.* Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

*Ham.* 'Tis e'en so: the land of little employment hath the daintier sense.

*First Clo.* [*Sings*] But age, with his stealing steps,
Hath claw'd me in his clutch,
And hath shipped me intil the land,
As if I had never been such.

[*Throws up a skull.*

*Ham.* That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once: how the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder! It might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'er-reaches; one that would circumvent God, might it not?

*Hor.* It might, my lord.

*Ham.* Or of a courtier, which could say 'Good morrow, sweet lord! How dost thou, sweet lord?' This might be my lord such-a-one, that praised

my lord such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it; might it not?

*Hor.* Ay, my lord.

*Ham.* Why, e'en so: and now my Lady Worm's; chapless, and knocked about the mazzard with a sexton's spade: here's fine revolution, and we had the trick to see't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggats with 'em? mine ache to think on't.

*First Clo.* [*Sings*] A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade,
For and a shrouding sheet:
O, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.

[*Throws up another skull.*

*Ham.* There's another: why may not that be the skull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddities now, his quillets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? Hum! This fellow might be in's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries: is this the fine of his fines and the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? The very conveyances of his lands will hardly lie in this box; and must the inheritor himself have no more, ha?

* * * * *

*First Clo.* Here's a skull now: this skull has lain in the earth three and twenty years.

*Ham.* Whose was it?

*First Clo.* A whoreson mad fellow's it was: whose do you think it was?

*Ham.* Nay, I know not.

*First Clo.* A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! a' poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the king's jester.

*Ham.* This?

*First Clo.* E'en that.

*Ham.* Let me see. [*Takes the skull.*] Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio; a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy: he hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now how abhorred in my imagination it is! my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning? quite chop-fallen? Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come; make her laugh at that. Prithee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

*Hor.* What's that, my lord?

*Ham.* Dost thou think Alexander looked o' this fashion i' the earth?

*Hor.* E'en so.

*Ham.* And smelt so? pah! [*Puts down the skull.*

*Hor.* E'en so, my lord.

*Ham.* To what base uses we may return Horatio! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bung-hole?

*Hor.* 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

*Ham.* No, faith, not a jot; but to follow him thither with modesty enough and likelihood to lead it: as thus: Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returned into dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam; and why of that loam, whereto he was converted, might they not stop a beer-barrel?

Imperious Cæsar, dead and turn'd to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away:
O, that that earth, which kept the world in awe,
Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw!

The funeral train now enters and Hamlet steps aside. The King, Queen, and Laertes are present.

*Queen.* [*Scattering flowers*] Sweets to the sweet: farewell!
I hoped thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife;
I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,
And not have strew'd thy grave.

*Laer.* O, treble woe
Fall ten time treble on that cursèd head
Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense
Deprived thee of! Hold off the earth a while,
Till I have caught her once more in mine arms:

[*Leaps into the grave*

Now pile your dust upon the quick and the dead,
Till of this flat a mountain you have made
To o'ertop old Pelion or the skyish head
Of blue Olympus.

*Ham.* [*Advancing*] What is he whose grief
Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wandering stars and makes them stand
Like wonder-wounded hearers? This is I,
Hamlet the Dane. [*Leaps into the grave.*

*Laer.* The devil take thy soul! [*Grappling with him.*

*Ham.* Thou pray'st not well.
I prithee take thy fingers from my throat;
For, though I am not splenitive and rash,
Yet have I in me something dangerous,
Which let thy wisdom fear. Hold off thy hand.

*King.* Pluck them asunder.

*Queen.* Hamlet, Hamlet!

*All.* Gentlemen,—

*Hor.* Good my lord, be quiet.

[*The attendants part them and they come out of the grave.*]

*Ham.* Why, I will fight with him upon this theme
Until my eyelids will no longer wag.

*Queen.* O my son, what theme?

*Ham.* I loved Ophelia; forty thousand brothers
Could not, with their quantity of love,
Make up my sum. What wilt thou do for her?

*King.* O, he is mad, Laertes.

*Queen.* For love of God, forbear him.

*Ham.* 'Swounds, show me what thou'lt do:

Woo't weep? woo't fight? woo't fast? woo't tear thyself?
Woo't drink up eisel? eat a crocodile?
I'll do't. Dost thou come here to whine?
To outface me with leaping in her grave?
Be buried quick with her, and so will I.
And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw
Millions of acres on us, till our ground,
Singeing his pate against the burning zone,
Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, an thou'lt mouth
I'll rant as well as thou.

*Queen.* This is mere madness:
And thus a while the fit will work on him;
Anon, as patient as the female dove
When that her golden couplets are disclosed,
His silence will sit drooping.

*Ham.* Hear you, sir;
What is the reason that you use me thus?
I loved you ever: but it is no matter;
Let Hercules himself do what he may,
The cat will mew, and dog will have his day.
[*Exit.*

*King.* I pray thee, good Horatio, wait upon him.
[*Exit Horatio.*

[*To Laertes*] Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech;
We'll put the matter to the present push.
Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.
This grave shall have a living monument:
An hour of quiet shortly shall we see;
Till then, in patience our proceeding be.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene 2. In the hall of the castle Hamlet tells Horatio how he found Rosencrantz and Giuldenstern had sealed orders for his death, which he changed so as to cause their death instead. When Horatio sighs he says,

*Ham.* Why, man, they did make love to this employment;
They are not near my conscience.

Horatio reminds him of his main business, to revenge his father's death, and how he is beset, but Hamlet replies,—

*Ham.* It will be short; the interim is mine;
And a man's life's no more than to say 'One'.

The fencing bout is now arranged, and they all gather in the presence of the King and Queen.

Before he begins to fight Hamlet begs pardon of Laertes, and confesses he has done him wrong. And then they play.

Following the old custom of dissolving a costly pearl in a glass of wine and giving it to drink, the King pretends to throw a union in a glass for Hamlet, but instead it is poison.

Hamlet will not drink till the bout is over, but the Queen takes the poisoned cup and drinks, and dies.

Laertes and Hamlet both are wounded, and as they have exchanged foils in the scuffle, both are wounded with the poisoned blade.

As the Queen dies Hamlet cries, "O villainy! Ho! let the door be locked. Treachery! seek it out!"

Laertes as he dies tells Hamlet the truth, whereupon Hamlet turns and stabs the King, and makes him

drink off the rest of the poisoned cup amid cries of "Treason."

The King dies, and Laertes as he dies repents and asks Hamlet's forgiveness.

And now Hamlet turns to his only friend, Horatio.

*Ham.* Horatio, I am dead;
Thou livest! report me and my cause aright
To the unsatisfied.

*Hor.* Never believe it:
I am more an antique Roman than a Dane:
Here's yet some liquor left.

*Ham.* As thou'rt a man.
Give me the cup: let go: by heaven, I'll have't.
O good Horatio, what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me!
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity a while,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain
To tell my story.
[*Marches afar off, and shot within.*
What warlike noise is this?

*Osric.* Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from Poland,
To the ambassadors of England gives
This warlike volley.

*Ham.* O, I die, Horatio;
The potent poison quite o'er-crowns my spirit:
I cannot live to hear the news from England;
But I do prophesy the election lights
On Fortinbras: he has my dying voice;

So tell him, with the occurrents, more or less,
Which have solicited—
The rest is silence. [*Dies.*

*Hor.* Now cracks a noble heart. Good night, sweet prince,
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!

[*A dead March.*]

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